JIŘÍ CEJPEK

IRANIAN FOLK-LITERATURE

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by Jan Rypka

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abh. — Abhandlungen
Abt. — Abteilung
ADTD — Ankara Üniversitesi, Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi
Ak. der W. und der L. — Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur
AN SSSR; AzSSR; Gruz SSR; TadzhSSR; Uzb SSR — Akademiya Nauk SSSR (=USSR); Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR; Gruzinskoy (= Georgian) SSR; Tadzhikskoy SSR; Uzbekskoy SSR
Annali (Napoli) — *Annali dell' Instituto universitario orientale di Napoli*
Antol. — Antologia tadzhikskoy poezii (see Bibl., D IIa)
AR — The Asiatic Review
Arb. — A. J. Arberry, *Persian Books, Catalogue of the Library of the India Office* (see Bibl. B I)
Arm. — Armaghān
ArOr. — Archiv Orientální
ASAW — Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig
b. — *ibn* ['son']
B. — Berlin
BAS — Baroi adabiëti sotsialisti (see Bibl., D IIIb)
BEO Damas — Bulletin d'études orientales. Institut français de Damas
BI — Bibliotheca Indica
bibl. — bibliography
BOE — Bibliothèque orientale Elzéverienne
BSL — Bulletin de la Société de linguistiquede Paris
BSO(A)S — Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies, London
CAJ — Central Asiatic Journal
CAR — Central Asian Review
coll. publ. — collective publication
cont., contin. — continuation(s)
CPL — A. J. Arberry, *Classical Persian Literature* (see Bibl., B v)
DAN — Dokladī Akademii Nauk SSSR
DRAN — Dokladī Rossiyskoy Akademii Nauk
ed. — edition, edited, editor
EI — Encyclopaedia of Islam (see Bibl., B I)
Ermit. — see below, *s.v.* 'Gos. Erm.'
Ethé — H. Ethé, *Neupersische Literatur* (see Bibl., B v)
Fihrist — Ibn an-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. by G. Flügel (Leipzig 1871–2)
FIZ — Farhang-i Īrān-zamīn
FO — Folia Orientalia
GAL — C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur* (see Bibl., B I)
GIPh — Grundriss der iranischen Philologie (see Bibl., B, p. 757)
GM(N)S — E. J. W. Gibb Memorial (New) Series
Gos.Erm. — Gosudarstvennïy Ermitazh, Leningrad
GSAI — Giornale della Società asiatica italiana
Ḥikmat — 'A.-A. Ḥikmat's translation of *LHP*, III (see Bibl., B v, *s.v.* 'E. G. Browne')

Hist.-filol.Medd. — *Det Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab. Historisk-filologiske Meddelelser*

Horn — Paul Horn, *Geschichte der persischen Literatur* (see Bibl., B v)

hrsg. — herausgegeben

İA — *İslam Ansiklopedisi*

IAN OGN; —*OON*; —*OLY* — *Izvestiya Akademii Nauk SSSR, otdeleniye gumanitarnïkh nauk*; — *otdeleniye obshchestvennïkh nauk*; — *otdeleniye literaturï i yazïka*

IC — *Islamic Culture*

IEFD — *İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyati Dergisi*

IHRC Procs. — *Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission*

IIFL — Georg Morgenstierne, *Indo-Iranian Frontier Languages* (Oslo 1929–1956) (Instituttet for sammenlignende kulturforskning)

ILG — Jan Rypka *et al.*, *Iranische Literaturgeschichte* (see Bibl., B v)

IPTL — Ye. E. Bertel's, *Izbranniye trudï*: *Istoriya persidsko-tadzhikskoy literaturï* (see Bibl., B v)

Isl. — *Der Islam*

Ist.Uzb. — *Istoriya Uzbekskoy SSR* (see Bibl., D IIa)

IVV — Institut vostokovedeniya Akademii Nauk SSSR

Izv. — *Izvestiya*

Izv.Tadzh. — *Izvestiya otdeleniya obshchestvennïkh nauk Akademii Nauk Tadzhikskoy SSR*, Dushanbe

JA — *Journal asiatique*

JAH — *Journal of Asian History*

JAOS — *Journal of the American Oriental Society*

JASP — *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*

JPHS — *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*

JRAS — *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, London

J(R)ASB — *Journal of the (Royal) Asiatic Society of Bengal*

JRCentr.AS — *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*

Karatay — F. E. Karatay, *İstanbul Üniversitesi ... kataloğu* (see Bibl., B I)

Kit. — *Kitābhā-i māh* (see Bibl., B I)

Kl. — Klasse

Krïmskiy — A. Krïmskiy, *Istoriya Persii* (see Bibl., B v)

Krïms'kiy (Ukr.) — A. Krïms'kiy, *Istoriya Persiyi* (see Bibl., B v)

KS — *Kratkiye soobshcheniya Instituta vostokovedeniya Akademii Nauk SSSR*, resp. *Instituta narodov Azii*

KSIE — *Kratkiye soobshcheniya Instituta etnografii*

L. — Leningrad

LGU — Leningradskiy gosudarstvenniy universitet

LHP — E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* (see Bibl., B v)

Lit.Ir. — *Literatura Irana X–XV vv.* (see Bibl., B VIa)

lith. — lithograph

Lpz. — Leipzig

M. — Moscow

MDASh — *Majalla-i Dānishkada-i adabiyyāt-i Shīrāz*

MDAT — *Majalla-i Dānishkada-i adabiyyāt-i Tihrān*

MEA — *Middle Eastern Affairs*

MEJ — *Middle Eastern Journal*

Mél. — *Mélanges*

Memoirs ASB — *Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*

MSOS — *Mitteilungen des Seminars für orientalische Sprachen, Westasiatische Studien*, Berlin

MS(S). — manuscript(s)

MTA — Magyar Tudományos Akadémia (Hungarian Academy of Sciences)

M. va M. — *Maorif va Madaniyat* (see Bibl., D IIIa)

MW — *The Muslim World*

NAA — *Narodï Azii i Afriki*

Namuna — *Namunahoi adabiëti tojik* (see Bibl., D IIa)

n.d. — not dated

NDAT — *Nashriyya-i Dānishkada-i adabiyyāt-i Tabrīz*

NKNI — *Nukhustīn kongre-i navīsandagān-i Īrān* (Tehran 1325)

NO — *Nový Orient*

NY — *List of Works in the New York Public Library* (see Bibl., B I)

OCM — *Oriental College Magazine*

OITL — I. S. Braginskiy, *Ocherki iz istorii tadzhikskoy literaturï* (see Bibl., D IIa)
OLZ — *Orientalische Literaturzeitung*
OM — *Oriente moderno*
per. — perevod, perevël ('translation', 'translated')
Przegl.Or. — *Przegląd Orientalistyczny*
PV — *Problemï vostokovedeniya*
RANL — *Rendiconti della Academia nazionale dei Lincei, Scienze morali*
red. — redaction, redactor
REI — *Revue des études islamiques*
repr. — reprinted
RES — *Revue des études sémitiques*
rev. — revised
RK — *Rāhnamā-i kitāb*
RMM — *Revue du monde musulman*
ROr. — *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*
RRAL — *Rendiconti della Reale academia de Lincei*
RSO — *Rivista degli studi orientali*
Sabk — Muḥ. Taqī Bahār, *Sabk-shināsī* (see Bibl., B IV)
Ṣafā — Dh.Ṣafā, *Ta'rīkh-i adabiyyāt dar Īrān* (see Bibl., B V)
Sb. — *Sbornik*
SBAW — *Sitzungsberichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften*
Shiblī — Shiblī Nu'mānī, *Shi'ru'l-'Ajam* (see Bibl., B V)
ShS — *Sharqi surkh* (see Bibl., D IIIb)
s.l. — *sine loco*
ṢM — *Ṣarkiyat Mecmuası*
Sobr. vost. rukop. — *Sobraniye vostochnïkh rukopisey Akademii Nauk Uzbekskoy SSR*, Tashkent
Spraw. Pols. Ak. Umiej — *Sprawozdania Polskiej Akademii Umijetnosci*
SSh — *Sadoi Sharq* (see Bibl., D IIIb)
St. — Stalinobod (Stalinabad)
Storey — C. A. Storey, *Persian Literature* (see Bibl., B V)
SV — *Sovetskoye vostokovedeniye*
T. — Tashkent
Thr. — Tehran
TIE — *Trudï Instituta etnografii*
TIYa — *Trudï Instituta yazïkoznaniya*
TM — *Türkiyat Mecmuası*
TMIV — *Trudï Moskovskogo Instituta vostokovedeniya*
TOV — *Trudï Otdela Vostoka*, Gos. Erm., Leningrad
trad. — traduction, traduit
TS — *Tojikistoni soveti* (see Bibl., D IIIb)
TTK — *Türk Tarih Kurumu*
UAS — *Uralic and Altaic Series (Indiana University Publications)*
übers. — übersetzt
Univ. — university publications, in particular: *Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tihrān*
UZIV — *Uchëniye zapiski Instituta vostokovedeniya Akademii Nauk SSSR*, Moscow
v., vv. — vek, veki ('century', 'centuries')
VoIst. — *Voprosï istorii*
WZKM — *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*
ZDMG — *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*
ZfA — *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*
ZIV — *Zapiski Instituta vostokovedeniya Akademii Nauk SSSR*
ZKV — *Zapiski kollegii vostokovedov pri Asiatskoy Muzeye Akademii Nauk, Leningrad*
ZVORAO — *Zapiski vostochnogo otdeleniya Russkogo arkheologicheskogo obshchestva*

≅ — indicates that the work referred to has been lithographed or printed several times in India, in Iran or in other Oriental countries.

(For a supplementary list of abbreviations, used only in the section on Persian Learned Literature, see p. 423, note 2)

GUIDE TO PRONUNCIATION

The spelling of Persian names, titles etc. in this work is based on a system of strict transliteration from the Arabic script. Geographic, ethnic and dynastic names, however, are usually given in a form which is current in English.

In pronouncing the transliterated Persian words the following rules should be observed:

1. *ā*, *ī* and *ū* are long vowels approximately like the English vowels in *barred, beat* and *booed*; the ancient *majhūl* vowels *ē* and *ō* (like English *ai* and *oa* in *raid* and *road*) have been disregarded as far as New Persian is concerned, with the exception of the section on Indo-Persian literature (pp. 711–734) | *au* and *ay* are diphthongs.
2. *zh* = French *j* in *jour*.
3. *ṯ* = *t* | *th* and *ṣ* = *s* | *ẕ*, *ḏ* and *dh* = *z*.
4. *gh* and *q* (Arabic *ghayn* and *qāf*) constitute a single phoneme in modern Persian: a voiced or unvoiced uvular plosive sounding like German *g* in *Tage* | *ḥ* = *h*, pronounced in all positions | *kh* = Scottish *ch* in *loch*.
5. ' and ' (Arabic *hamza* and *'ayn*) represent a *hiatus* between two vowels or the lengthening of a preceding short vowel before a consonant; otherwise they are to be disregarded in pronunciation.

In the section on Ancient and Middle Iranian literature (pp. 1–67) some additional rules have been applied:
1. *ə* = a short intermediate vowel approximately like English *u* in *but* | *ą* = a nasalised vowel like French *en* | *ṛ* (in Old Iranian and Old Indic) = a retroflected *r* used as a vowel.
2. *ṣ* (in Khotanese and Old Indic) = *sh*.
3. *th* = English *th* in *thing*.
4. *ṅ* = *ng*.

In the section on Tajik literature (pp. 483–605) a different system of transliteration has been adopted, based on the current orthography of the Tajik language. The following rules are only valid in that section:
1. *o* (Persian *ā*) and *e* are always long vowels | long *ī* is exclusively used at the end of a word; the short *i* in that position marks the *izofa* (*iḍāfat*) | *ū* = a labialised long vowel lower than *u* and higher than *o* | *ë* = *yo* (Persian *yā*) | *ĭ* (in diphthongs) = *y*.

2. ‘ = cyrillic ъ written both for etymological *hamza* and *‘ayn* | ’ = cyrillic ь, the so-called *alomati judoī*, a punctuation point placed before ё, я (*ya*) and ю (*yu*): *e.g. bis’ër.*
3. *gh* and *q* are still separate phonemes in Tajik.
This system has also been applied to names and titles belonging to the older periods of Tajik literature when the Arabic script was still in use: *e.g. Badoe‘-ul-vaqoe‘* instead of *Badāyi‘u’l-vaqāyi‘*.

In Turkish words:
1. *ı* (in the Latin alphabet of Turkey), *ī* (in the Turkic languages of the Soviet Union) = an unrounded intermediate vowel like Russian ы (here also transcribed as *ī*).
2. *c* = *j* | *ç* = *ch* | *ş* = *sh*.
3. *ğ* = *y* (with front vowels) or a very weakly pronounced guttural (with back vowels).

ERRATA

P. 133, line 7: Ibn-i Murfarrigh *must be* Ibn-i Mufarrigh
P. 133, line 32: OF MIDDLE AND PERSIAN VERSE *must be* OF MIDDLE AND NEW PERSIAN VERSE
P. 259, line 11: *Tārīkh-i must be Ta'rīkh-i*
P. 274, note 6: Ivanow *must be* Ivanov
P. 306, line 15: *BAZ-GĀSHT must be BĀZ-GASHT*
P. 307, line 32: *baz-gāsht must be bāz-gasht*
P. 558, line 35: Abdurauf *must be* Abdurrauf
P. 658, line 17: *mathnavī must be Mathnavī*
P. 722, line 4: *mathnavī must be Mathnavī*
P. 733, note 2: Abdulvahab *must be* Abdul Wahab
P. 739, line 13: Ibn Abu'l-Khayr *must be* Ibn Abi'l-Khayr
P. 740, note 1, line 3: *read* 'Qissai Yusuf u Zulaykha'

Map to:
Rypka,
History of Iranian Literature
Scale 1:11 000 000
0 100 200 300 km
International Boundaries
CASPIAN SEA
ARAL SEA
BLACK SEA
PERSIAN GULF
Georgian SSR
Arm. SSR
Azerbaijan SSR
Kirgiz SSR
Turkmen SSR
Tajik SSR
Uzbek SSR
KHVARAZM
SOGHDIA
SAMARKAND
BACTRIA
TOKHARISTAN
TABARISTAN
MEDIA
PARTHIA
KHURASAN
KURDISTAN
LURISTAN
KHUZISTAN
KUWAYT
SAUDI-ARABIA
IRAN
AFGHANISTAN
PAKISTAN
INDIA
Kara-kum
Kyzyl-kum
Elbrus
Tiflis
Derbent
Ganja
Shemakha
Baku
Erivan
Ararat
Nakhjavan
Lake Van
Aras or Araxes
Tabriz
Ardabil
Urmia
Maragha
Rasht
GILAN
Lahijan
Mosul
Tigris
Paykuh
Alamut
MAZANDARAN
Elburz Mountains
Amul
Sultaniyya
Qazvin
Tehran
Ray
Astarabad
GURGAN
Atrek
Nisa
Ashkhabad
Merv
Tus
Mashhad
Sarakhs
Murghab
Marv-i Rud
Balkh
(Bactra)
Baadakhshan
Hindukush
KASHMIR
Kashghar
Khwarazm(Khiva)
Tashkent
Chach
Syr-Darya (Yaxartes)
Khojand
Zarafshan
Bukhara
Samarkand
Karshi
Hisar Mts.
Dushanbe
Amu-Darya (Oxus)
Kattaman
Vakhsh
Baljuvan
Tirmiah
Khorog
Shughnan
Panj
Simnan
Damghan
Shahrud
Sabzavar
Nishapur
Turshiz
Dasht-i Kavir
Dasht-i Lut
Kashan
Tun
Isfahan
Birjand
Yazd
Kirman
Bamiyan
Herat
Hari-rud
Kabul
Khaybar-P.
Peshawar
Ghazna
Qandahar
Lahore
Indus
Hilmand
Hamun-i Hilmand
Zamanzan
Ahvaz
Susa
Shushtar
Gundishapur
Dezful
Euphrates
Tigris
Basra
Abadan
Shatt-al-Arab
Neutr. Terr.
Kuwayt
Nekr. Terr.
Bushahr
Hajjiabad
Istakhr
Murghab
Pasargadae
Persepolis
Shapur
Shiraz
Firuzabad
Bandar Abbas
Hormoz
Bahrayn
Qadisiya
Najaf
Karbala
Kufa
Hilla
Babylon
Seleucia
Baghdad
Samarra
Qasr-i Shirin
Taq-i Bustan
Kermanshah
Bahistan
Hamadan
Nihavand
Khurramabad
Save
Qum

General Remarks concerning the Terminology:

English usage prefers to say 'folk-literature', which in some cases is not entirely accurate. Only folk-books, folk-prints and some forms of religious folk-drama were composed and actually handed down in written form. On the other hand the folk-epics, both of the heroic and of the romantic type, of all sizes, have a long oral tradition. Their reduction to writing is only a result of collecting the folk-traditions in the course of folkloristic research. Therefore it is hardly adequate to speak of 'folk-literature' in the case of the above-mentioned orally transmitted forms. It is difficult to translate the German 'Volksdichtung' by 'folk-poetry' because of the ambiguity arising from the fact that 'folk-poetry' also means the verse forms of folk-literature (see Chapter IX) likewise transmitted in the oral form only.

As the terminological criteria applying to European and Oriental folkloristic research are divergent, I beg the reader to excuse the inevitable compromises.

By 'folk-tradition' must be understood all genres of folk-literature, whether handed down by word of mouth or in written form.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. CONTRASTS BETWEEN FOLK-LITERATURE AND POLITE LITERATURE

The boundaries between folk-literature and polite literature are neither definite nor clearly marked; on the contrary they intermingle freely and influence each other in such a manner that it is very often difficult to classify a work correctly.

The most decisive differences are those of style. Folk-tradition generally shows a distinct preference for a simpler style. Linguistically, works of folk-literature are characterised by the smaller number of Arabic words they contain compared with works of polite literature. Arabic loan words are used only to the extent that they are indispensable in the every-day speech of the least educated. Thus the Iranian element also predominates in the vocabulary.

Although in the case of most European nations, the fact that a certain work has been handed down in written form or orally can be seen as an important criterion for its classification for polite literature or folk-tradition respectively, this is not true for Iran. Some forms of Iranian folk-literature do not fit into the usual classification of European folk-literature, for a large number of Iranian folk-books have been handed down and given a definite shape in writing or in print. Dramatic folk-literature occupies an intermediate position as it makes use of written stage directions as well as orally transmitted models, while we also find a large measure of oral improvisation.

In general one might say that polite literature catered for the taste of the ruling classes and took their part against their enemies, and that folk-literature satisfied the cultural needs of the common people dominated by the comparatively small upper classes of society.

It is impossible to regard the folk-tradition as homogeneous in its ideology. Next

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to undoubtedly progressive judgments on the faults and imperfections of society, there are also sentiments that are frankly unprogressive. An explanation might be that the ruling classes, aware of the value of literature, wrote small works (most often trashy and full of obscurantism) themselves or had them written by their literary hacks for the people, with the aim to discourage them – since they were uneducated and could seldom read and even more seldom write – from contemplating the burning problems of social antagonism. Apart from this, really worthwhile literature was for the most part accessible only to the nobility, the rich and the more educated among the priesthood, partly because of the scarcity of manuscripts and the high cost of copying or, in later years, of printing, and also because of the cultural and educational gulf between the common people and the upper classes. Folk-prints were therefore well suited, by idealising the way of life of the feudal upper classes of Iranian society, to dull the awareness of class differences and to disorganise the united front of the have-nots against the rich.

The area covered by Iranian culture is rich in linguistic variety[1], although nowadays the schools are beginning to level out these differences. But for a long time most of the language boundaries have formed no restriction for the subjects of either folk or polite literature. It is therefore rather difficult to separate Iranian subjects from those of Indian origin, and likewise to decide what is of East-Turkish derivation. Generally one can without exaggeration regard a considerable number of Iranian folklore elements as international in the best sense of the word, for in the area under discussion motifs and subjects were mixed frequently and with rich results. For the cause of this phenomenon one has to look to the historical circumstances of these regions – integration of various peoples happened more than once in Turkestan.[2] Consequently one cannot exclude the possibility of many themes, traditions and separate details having been transmitted from the original Iranian population to the nowadays East-Turkish-speaking inhabitants. Without going into the reasons, it is undoubtedly true to say that in most places the original Iranian population had for many centuries shown little resistance to turkization. Although the conquered had adopted the language of the conquerors, from a cultural point of view the former were at least a step ahead of the latter. It is understandable therefore that the disappearance of Iranian *ethnos* in Turkestan did not mean the disappearance of Iranian folklore subjects; on the contrary, an impressive number of these served as a foundation for countless developments in polite literature as well as folk-tradition, particularly among the East-Turkish peoples of Central Asia.[3]

B. DIRECTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT OF IRANIAN FOLK-LITERATURE

The real and decisive cause of the final separation, completed in the 16th century, of the Iranians – Persians in the west, Tajiks in the east – was their religious antagonism. From this time onwards, western Iran adhered to the Shī'a and the inhabitants of the river basin of the Amu-Darya to the Sunna.[4]

The breach did not of course take place suddenly but was the result of a two-way linguistic development that had started very early on but began to be more productive only after the two cultural areas had become established as separate entities. These dividing influences have become particularly effective in recent years. When the Tajik written language was formed, its most natural sources were used, namely the colloquial language and local dialects.[5] Nevertheless the differences between modern Persian and the Tajik language are slighter than those between Low and High German; the most essential are the Tajik peculiarities regarding conjugation, verbal periphrasis, vocabulary, phraseology, and syntax.[6]

Far more conspicuous are the differences between specific folklore subjects, while opposing confessional principles, both in religious folk-literature and in the religious legends, are the most strongly marked of all.

These differences of faith come least to the fore in the heroic epics, where a great many pre-Islamic elements remain, and only exceptionally do we come across subjects that have been islamised, and then mostly only superficially. In the romantic epics Islamic or islamised motifs and subjects have become more common. The degree of religious colouring varies from case to case, so that often quite grotesque gradations of the same influence are to be found.

The principle of epic cyclisation has in any event proved to be an extremely effective stimulus to the arrangement of the most diverse epical subjects from Iranian folk-traditions and folk-literature in general.

Within the framework of the epic cycle there was abundant scope for imagination and creative liberty. We need not look far for examples – in some instances several themes had already found their way to neighbouring peoples, even before the final cyclisation had been achieved in the form of Firdausī's life-work. This explains the occurrence of differing versions or wordings of a common basic motif.

The impetus given by epic cyclisation stimulated not only the development of Iranian national traditions as established by Firdausī and his followers[7], although their works are undoubtedly the most important; its powerful effects can also be discerned in the Ossetian sagas about the Narts and in the Tajik epic cycle of Gūrughlī. The system of correlation, however, was not everywhere thought out and carried through as carefully and flawlessly as in the *Shāh-nāma*. It is precisely these disproportionate after-effects of epic cyclisation that teach us how the earlier stages of development were gradu-

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ally reached, up to the composition of the *Shāh-nāma* and similar epic poems.

Romantic and erotic components are already to be found in the early epical poems. Here again many folklore subjects, usually of considerable antiquity, have been adapted in varying fashion in folk-tradition as well as in works of polite literature.

In the course of development of feudal society it was only logical that folk-romances of chivalry should also put in an appearance, and these bore unmistakable evidence of folklore influence. They were transmitted at first orally, later in written form, and even in print. The *dāstāns* can be seen as a transitional type between the epics, entertainment literature and fairy-tales.

Entertainment literature is often remarkable for its peculiar didactic aims. This genre always appealed to rulers and common people alike, and it did not really matter whether it took the form of fables (particularly *Kalīla u Dimna*), entertainment or didactic literature in a narrower sense (*Ṭūṭī-nāma*), or single motifs and subjects from the *Thousand and One Nights*. Even though they were laid down in writing, all of these remained very close to folk-literature despite many further developments, and quite apart from numerous recasts of single motifs. Of the greatest importance are further the many varieties of fairy-tales and anecdotes which would appear to be the chief sources of all types of folk-literature that have ever existed.

With a character of their own that is hard to account for are the folk-prints, possibly because this kind of folk-literature, as such not even of ancient origin, is really disappearing today after having developed under the most varied influences. This category of works is marked by an increasing imprint of both the main streams of Islamic orthodoxy, often conspicuous by glaring anachronisms (the legendary figure of Rustam, for instance, becomes islamised[8]).

The religious folk-literature of the Shī'ites served as the basis for religious mystery plays, which can be regarded as forerunners of the *ta'ziyas*. In some respects the *ta'ziya* may be said to be a kind of passion play. Several customs and ceremonies, mostly of a dramatic nature, are closely connected with them. To this category belongs also however the religious parody and farce, *'Umar-kushān*. This kind of religious drama does not occur in Tajik folk-literature – a logical consequence of the difference of religious denominations. And it is understandable that also the Tajik counting-out rhymes used by prize-fighters bear a different character, since in Persia proper they show a strong Shī'ite colour. This should not surprise us, for folk-customs are very closely linked with the general way of life, the culture and consequently the ideology of the society in question.

Folk-poetry, on the contrary, as long as it does not spring from a religious theme to begin with, generally remains unaffected by the religious differentiation we have just discussed.

Upon the whole it has to be remembered that the various forms of Iranian folk-literature are by no means isolated from one another. Many subjects have been treated in more than one way. Sometimes the different treatments are related to one another

('Alī in religious legends and *ta'ziyas*, later also in folk-tales; Rustam in epics, *dāstāns* and heroic folk-tales), but it also happened that one form served as model for a later one. In many cases, however, connections are more likely to be accidental. A singular and usually highly problematical group form those incidences where the names of famous heroes are connected with predominantly fantastic and romantic adventures. Such fabulous stories are to a great extent foreign to the epic cycles. What we meet here are very likely the last echoes of universally familiar motifs, while the hero's name (Rustam etc.) serves only to remind the audience of the traditional images and characteristics and of authentic heroic exploits and adventures, and to link up the new story with them. One may fairly suppose that in this way countless unhistorical episodes were accumulated around the historical core of a relatively small number of traditional sagas. In many cases such additions have obscured the original sagas and the prototypal characters of particular figures, sometimes even obliterating them completely.

C. THE IMPORTANCE OF FOLK-LITERATURE

Unfortunately it cannot be said that folk-literature has always been given its due rating. There have been periods during the development of human society when it was held in contempt. Belles-lettres were considered the only possible means of expression for the artistic impulse. How much it owed precisely to the inspiration of folk-literature was at the same time completely disregarded.

Since the number of tragic and other conflicts expressed in literature is fairly limited in any case, it is understandable that similar themes should appear in the literatures of different nations and ages. But this by no means implies that we should conclude without reserve that they were mutually influenced, or derived from the same primary sources. Schack[9] rightly observes that certain fundamental poetic archetypes never cease to repeat themselves.

However, it is a different matter when versions of the same motif issuing from different localities and different periods agree even in detail, in outward form, composition, sequence of events or in the presentation of the characters and the psychological make-up of personages. When this phenomenon can be witnessed among nations of common origin that were formerly in contact with one another, such similarities are of the greatest significance and importance.[10]

Folk-literature is by no means restricted to reproduction, its aim is always towards further development.[11] From the earliest times on and in its own particular manner, folk-literature has unceasingly formed an accompaniment to the history of Man. Maxim Gorky[12] made a striking observation on the significance of folk-tales handed down to us from ancient times when he said: Old folk-tales, myths and legends are of course

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familiar to us, but it is essential that we become acquainted as thoroughly as possible with their original meaning. People living at the dawn of history were concerned with alleviating their toil, increasing its productivity and arming themselves against four-footed enemies. Further, they tried to influence the elements and natural phenomena inimical to mankind through the power of words and exorcism. This is very important since it shows how profound was man's belief in the power of words. At the same time Gorky points out that the conception of pessimism is quite alien to folk-literature, despite the fact that its creators must have experienced life as a constant struggle. He finally remarks that without a knowledge of folk-literature it is impossible to ascertain the true history of the working people.[13] In times of untroubled development folk-literature has the task of satisfying the cultural and artistic demands of the people, and in times of danger it has to instruct and guide them and inspire them with courage and endurance. The subjects of folk-literature, too, are suited to the circumstances: in dangerous times it is mainly concerned with concrete motifs, during periods of peace imagination and fancy take the upper hand.[14] Folk-literature forms part of the literary heritage of a people, it follows the laws that operate in the development of literature, it springs from the same society and consequently reflects the changes in the latter.[15]

Folklore subjects prove to be fertile for very long periods of time. Even today, for example, modern Tajik dramatists take their themes from folk-literature both for plays and opera librettos. Quite a number of folk-tales also prove their use as bearers of illustrative material in literary history, for there exist many anecdotes and tales about prominent men. Thus Firdausī, Nāṣir-i Khusrau, Mushfiqī, Navā'ī, among others have remained in the people's memory.[16] And even from the view of cultural history these tales are valuable and full of significance. Thus folk-literature, as a historical document and as an expression of the historical awareness of the people, must be considered of very great value.

Particularly is this so in the case of the very old epic story of King Sugdyn (Sughdak) and his daughter Queen Zarrīna that has so fortunately been preserved. To all appearances this must be a rare relic of Soghdian folk-tradition of great antiquity. Probably Zarrīna was in fact a historical figure, for her name is mentioned by Ctesias in a surviving fragment dated approximately 400 B.C.[17] Curiously enough no account was taken of this epic cycle when the *Shāh-nāma* was being composed.

Female characters in folk-literature appear in a position that is in crass contrast to the actual circumstances prevailing up to a few years ago, for it shows a reverence for women and gives them a social position such as they have not enjoyed since matriarchal times. This must not be seen as an anachronism, but as valuable historical evidence that once upon a time women also had their rights.[18]

Gorky is therefore right in insisting upon the collecting and studying of folk-literature.[19] As we have said already, folk-literature is a reflection of real life. And that is why modern Tajik literature consciously uses it as its starting-point.[20] The systematic work of investigation being done in this field in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan

and elsewhere has encouraged Iranians too at last to pay some attention to their native folk-literature, which they had hitherto despised and considered backward. As a result of this activity the Ethnographic Museum of Tehran was founded in 1933. Among other things a considerable quantity of folklore material was brought together, but unfortunately in the copy that was made of it all peculiarities of origin and dialect were effaced, thus greatly diminishing the value of the collection. Ṣādiq Hidāyat made an attempt at sorting out the Iranian folklore[21] in his *Nayrangistān*. Another collector was Kūhī Kirmānī.

NOTES

1. Oranskiy, I.M., *Vvedeniye v iranskuyu filologiyu* (M. 1960), 22–53, 135–143, 212–221, 288–352; Oranskiy, I.M., *Iranskiye yazïki* (M. 1963); cf. also *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, I. Abt., IV. Bd.: *Iranistik*, 1. Abschnitt: *Linguistik* (Leiden 1958).
2. Cf. Tolstov, S.P.–Zhdanko, T.A., 'Osnovnïye etapï etnicheskoy istorii narodov Sredney Azii i Kazakhstana', in *Narodï Sredney Azii i Kazakhstana*, I (M. 1962), 38–114.
3. Cf. Zhirmunskiy, V.M.–Zarifov, Kh. T., *Uzbekskiy narodnïy geroicheskiy epos* (M. 1947), especially 131–164, 278–301; Zhirmunskiy, V.M., 'Epicheskoe tvorchestvo narodov Sredney Azii', in *Narodnïy geroicheskiy epos* (M.-L. 1962), 195–240; cf. also *Istoriya literatur narodov Sredney Azii i Kazakhstana* (M. 1960).
4. Petrushevskiy, I.P., 'Iran v sostave gosudarstva Sefevidov', in *Istoriya Irana s drevneyshikh vremen do kontsa XVIII veka* (Leningrad 1958), 247–265; *Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda*, II, kn. 1 (M. 1964), 364–420.
5. Cf. Rastorguyeva, V.S., *Opït sravnitel'nogo izucheniya tadzhikskikh govorov* (M. 1964).
6. Cf. Cejpek, J., 'Die verbale Periphrase als ein wichtiges Unterscheidungsmerkmal zwischen Neupersisch aund Tāğikisch', *ArOr*, 24,2 (1956), 171–182; cf. also Lazard, G., *Caractères distinctifs de la langue tadjik* (Paris 1956)(=*BSL*, 52,1 117–186).
7. Cf. Bertel's Ye.E., *Istoriya persidsko-tadzhikskoy literaturï* (M. 1960), 169–286; cf. also Braginskiy, *Iz istorii...*, 307–323, *Ocherki*, 166–206; Zand, M.I., *Shest vekov slavï* (M. 1964), 79–95, 96–110.
8. Romaskevich, *Ocherki izucheniya Shakhname*, 45; Zhukovskiy, *Musul'manstvo Rustama*, 109, 116–117.
9. In his introduction to Firdausī's heroic epic tales.
10. Cf. Ethé, *Essays und Studien*, 256.
11. Zhirmunskiy, *Problema fol'klora*, 200.
12. Gor'kiy, Maxim, *O literature* (M. 1937); cf. also special anthology: *Pushkin i Gor'kiy o narodnom tvorchestve* (M. 1938), 27–98; cf. also an essay by Yu. N. Sidorova, 'A. M. Gor'kiy o narodnom tvorchestve', in *Rus. nar. poet. tvorchestvo*, ed. Bogatïrev, 138–156.
13. *Chuvashskiye skazki*, 10, 13, 15; *Skazki i legendï tatar Krïma*, 13.
14. Plotnikov, *Yangal maa*, 14–16.
15. *Sk. i leg. tatar Krïma*, 13.
16. Klimovich, L., *Khrestomatiya po literaturam narodov SSSR*, 23, 140, 108, 776 *et seq.*; cf. also Zand, *Shest vekov slavï, passim.*
17. *Antologiya tadzhikskoy poezii*, 1st ed., 23, 30, 579.

18. Klimovich, *op. cit.*, 789.
19. *Sk. i leg. tatar Krîma*, 9.
20. *Antologiya tadzh. poezii* 1st ed., 9, 21.
21. For Russian translation see *Peredneaziatskiy etnograficheskiy sbornik*, I, 259–336.

II. IRANIAN FOLK-EPICS

A. IRANIAN EPICAL SUBJECTS AS CONVEYED BY CLASSICAL AUTHORS[1]

The first classical author who consciously made use of Iranian tradition and brought it into play in his works was Herodotus.[2] The very nature of his work (the exposition of the causes and course of the Greco-Persian wars, and the explanation of all the circumstances which gave rise to them) provided the stimulus to make a start with the mythical history.

Herodotus had to content himself with second-hand information (using interpreters?). It is easy to imagine that the Father of Greek historiography based his accounts of ancient traditions and the earliest history of various classical and ancient oriental peoples upon their folk-tradition as it existed at his own time. This is true especially in the case of the historical traditions of the Persians and Medes. Apparently Herodotus was not familiar with the royal annals mentioned both by the ancient Greek author Ctesias[3] and by the Old Testament Book of Esther.[4] In any case he does not refer to them. He certainly had no archives at his disposal either when he wrote the history of Persia.

The Scythian traditions recorded by Herodotus in connection with the Scythian expedition of Darius[5] are of the greatest importance. Interesting too are his essays on the manners and customs of the Scythians.[6] Nevertheless it is clear that Herodotus was often at a loss to understand and explain specific points correctly. Value must also be attributed to his records concerning certain fragments of West-Iranian traditions.[7]

Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*[8] is another work that until now has not been duly esteemed. It is some hundred years younger than the *Histories* of Herodotus, having been composed approximately in the year 362 B.C., and should be regarded more as a historical novel than as a piece of authentic historiography. Iranian traditions are included in it

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to a wide extent, though the author's own contribution, particularly from an ideological stand-point, is not to be underestimated. Nevertheless it appears that all those who have interpreted the works of Xenophon, from antiquity up till very recently, have attributed far too much to the imagination of the ancient writer. Of course he was responsible for rhetorical embellishments and for many additions in the sphere of composition, but he paid at least as much attention to the Iranian folk-traditions. Xenophon, after all, lived long enough among the Persians to become familiar with their traditional history.

A particularly important source for our knowledge of ancient traditions are the writings of Diodorus of Sicily.[9] It is true that he belongs to the age of Caesar and Augustus – considerably later therefore than his forerunners in this respect – but he consulted many documents that no longer exist, among them being the *Persika* of Ctesias.[10] Diodorus' practice of mixing authentic history with folk traditions somewhat uncritically has turned out to be our good fortune since in this way a number of ancient folk traditions have been preserved that would otherwise have remained unknown, other authors having passed them by as unsuitable for recording.

The rest of the classical authors do not contribute anything essential or new, apart from a few references, but we do find some fresh subjects in Justinus's *Excerpts from the Histories of Trogus Pompeius*.[11]

Of the late classical authors Athenaeus of Naucratis[12] should especially be mentioned. This grammarian of the 3rd century A.D. is mainly important for his *Deipnosophistai*, 'The Banquet of the Sages', which has been preserved. In this work, which in itself cannot lay claim to any great originality, the author provides an enormous mass of quotations from otherwise forgotten and unknown writers belonging to all manner of literary categories and trends. Among other material there is much that is valuable for the study of the old Iranian folk-traditions. Athenaeus gives us, for example, a most remarkable account by Chares of Mytilene[13], according to which the Persians already sang romances at the time of Alexander the Great. These romances gave a poetical rendering of legendary love stories. Chares mentions as an example a *Romance of Zariadres and Odatis*, Zariadres being of course none other than the Zairivairish of the *Avesta* or the Zarēr of Pahlavi literature.[14]

Very probably the influence of Iranian folk-tradition was much greater in the ancient world than the surviving evidence would have us believe. Greek influences, on the contrary, although they were very fertile during certain periods (at the time of Alexander and the Diadochi), had little lasting effect on Iranian folk-tradition and have disappeared almost without trace after contributing surprisingly little to its development or its store of subjects. An exception of course is the *Alexander Romance* by Pseudo-Callisthenes.[15] As for Greek philosophy in the 6th century A.D., it unfortunately lasted too short a time to have any effect on folk-tradition; such early Byzantine influences are to be found rather in Islamic philosophy.

It must be admitted, however, that the number of Iranian motifs we come across

in ancient literature is comparatively small – limited in fact to fragments and relics. They nevertheless prove by their style and composition that the folk-literature of Iran can boast an ancient and richly developed tradition.

B. IRANIAN FOLK-EPICS IN PRE-ISLAMIC TIMES

The already discussed testimony of the classical authors as to the existence of Iranian folk-epics confirms that Iranian traditions had already at that time a long history of development behind them. This means that we have to place the beginning of these old folk-traditions in the pre-historic ages of Iran, which does not mean that they are unhistorical. Many a recollection in early folk-literature provides a tempting starting-point for historical investigation.

Analyses of the most ancient Iranian conceptions, especially their mythological components, would require the writing of special and extensive treatises. But we can surely prove true the syncretism in the conception of the world as seen by the ancient Iranians. Long before the reformation of the old religion by Zarathustra there probably existed completely worked-out cycles of cosmogonical myths[16], or else myths about animals containing obvious features of totemism[17], demonological myths[18] and others dealing with the first people and the first heroes[19] (Kayōmarth, Jamshēd, Garshāsp, Rustam and his clan, the Pēshdādiāns, Kayāniāns, etc.). A clear idea of the earliest form of Iranian mythology is hard to come by because Zoroastrian religious reform distorted old conceptions by means of dense strata of later and mostly syncretic innovations. Unfortunately we know the Avesta only from later versions, so that it is necessary to be very cautious in making categoric statements.

The ancient Iranian conception of the world is worth noting for the fact that the gods of the heavens were held to have become regents of the earth. In the Indian *Vedas* the heroes fight their battles in heaven, but in the Iranian Avesta these take place on earth. Ethical conflicts have arisen from the struggles between the natural phenomena. As far as its character goes, the Iranian heroic tradition has reached the threshold of true history.

The epical traditions of the Iranians go back very far indeed. This is borne out, among other things, by the fact that the Avesta presupposes an already richly developed system of mythical history. Even the continuity of the various episodes and single events had been fully worked out by the time the earliest parts of the Avesta were taking form. If we assume that Zarathustra was preaching in the 7th century B.C. (a very sober estimate) and that the Iranian plateau began to be inhabited by Iranian tribes around the 12th to the 10th century[20], we separate these two events by at least three-hundred years, which is the length of time usually necessary for memories of

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historical events to turn into myths and legends. No doubt also these traditions were subjected to development, transformation and elaboration. In the Avesta, after all, there are many figures which Firdausī's *Shāh-nāma* does not mention; on the other hand there are entire cycles of traditions either not acknowledged in the Avesta or regarded as apocryphal and uncanonical.[21]

How abundant the Iranian folk-literature of pre-Islamic times was, can best be appreciated when one remembers that almost all Persian epics, Firdausī's as well as those of his followers, continue to build on pre-Islamic folk-motifs. And despite many hundreds of thousands of verses, it cannot be said that the wealth of motifs from folk-epics is altogether exhausted. It is characteristic of all Persian polite literature as well as of Iranian folk-literature that with few exceptions almost exclusively eastern Iranian subjects are used, local influences penetrating only occasionally. Western Iranian motifs have vanished completely, and the northern Iranian folk-traditions have gone their own way. The Ossetian sagas about the Narts show a very marked departure from the old Iranian tradition with which they used to be so closely linked. This was no doubt a result of the entirely different geographical and historical circumstances under which both developed. Firdausī's *Shāh-nāma* is invaluable as a source of information about Iranian folk-literature at the time of its transition from the pre-Islamic to the Islamic period. Nevertheless, it would be a serious mistake to suppose that the *Shāh-nāma*, or its model, the *Khvatāy-nāmak*, is anything but an epitome of the wealth of folk-traditions that existed at that time. Arabic historical texts (for the rest written by authors of Iranian descent, or at least dependent upon Iranian sources) prove that there existed also other versions of the ancient Iranian traditions that varied from those codified in the *Khvatāy-nāmak*.[22]

It is characteristic of the development of pre-Islamic Iranian traditions that the heroic motifs gradually became isolated. By the end of the Sasanian period we can therefore speak of two separate traditions existing side by side – the religious and the heroic. In a way the splitting up of the Iranian tradition was fortunate, for it is precisely due to this that so much of ancient Iranian folk-literature has come down to us. Only some of the most tangible signs of pre-Islamic religious thinking needed to be eliminated for Persian epic poetry founded on folk-literature to reach its greatest heights.

If comparatively little of the original Avesta has been preserved, Sasanian Pahlavi literature[23] fared hardly better; practically the only writings that have survived – and some of these are of a very late date – are religious and theological. We possess extremely little secular literature: the *Zhāmasp-nāmak*, *Artāk Virāz-nāmak*, *Kārnāmak-i Ardakhshēr*, *Chatrang-nāmak*, the *Āyātkār-i Zarērān*[24], and that just about sums it up. Although therefore almost nothing of the secular literature of the Sasanian era remains, one may safely suppose that a very considerable amount of entertainment literature was written in pre-Islamic Iran.

This is also borne out by the fact that the translators of the *Khvatāy-nāmak* into Arabic introduced several fragments from other Pahlavi books. There are a great

many such Arabic translations, or rather adaptations, of single works of Iranian entertainment literature; moreover we must bear in mind that the translators selected their stories with great care, preserving in this way the best and most interesting samples from the Sasanian period. At the end of the pre-Islamic age there were therefore a great number of folk-books whose subjects were partly historical (or rather quasi-historical) stories, but were mostly based on folk-traditions and are indeed further developments of these. The *Kitābu'l-Fihrist* of Muḥammad b. Isḥāq an-Nadīm, dating from 377/988[25], records an imposing list of such Arabic translations from Iranian originals. Among these are also several local traditions, which are partly elaborations of some fragments of traditions. *Mazdak-nāmak*, *Anōsharvān-nāmak* and *Vahrām-Chōpēn-nāmak* are some of the titles mentioned.[26]

These works – to all appearances influenced largely by folk-literature, or in any case intended for the common people – are important also for the following reason, namely that some of them very probably survive not only in the cycle of *A Thousand and One Nights* (at least to the extent of certain motifs), but were still to be found resounding in early New Persian literature.[27]

A number of folk-books were adaptations of several legends about Sasanian kings. In addition to *Kārnāmak-i Ardakhshēr*, of which we possess the Pahlavi original, this category includes among others the *Book of Vahrām and Narsē*[28] that probably dealt with Vahrām V Gor and his brother Narsē. A certain Narsē is known to have been regent for his brother at the time of the campaign to the north, and later governor in Khurasan. Unfortunately we have no more precise information about the contents, but the work was probably based on one of the legends around Bahrām Gor, and was almost certainly of a later date. These legends were also in later days frequently used as a starting-point for numerous literary epics.

Another category is that of the love romances. One of the favourite subjects that is used again and again is *Vīs u Rāmīn*.[29] Although it is a typical love story it can also be regarded as a drama, notably the conflict between the generations, represented by an ageing king and a youth, ruthless in love. Repercussions of this cycle of motifs can be traced and found right up to the Middle Ages in Western Europe in the romance of Tristan and Isolde.[30]

But these are by no means all the epic subjects of the pre-Islamic period. Most of the sources of our knowledge about ancient Arabic and Persian chronicles and the *Khvatāy-nāmak* prove that there are many variants in existence that make it obvious that also other fountain-heads of folk-traditions need to be considered. At the same time these varying details reveal a distinctly Sasanian or even older, Arsacid stamp. This would explain the presence of a number of episodes in the *Shāh-nāma* for which it is impossible to find models. After all, we cannot expect Firdausī to have created out of his own imagination, without any previous patterns, so many of Rustam's deeds such as the conquering of the stronghold of Spand, or the seven adventures of Rustam, the battle between Rustam and the Dēv Akvān, the episodes about Rustam and Suhrāb,

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Bīzhan and Manēzha, and others.[31] And the same is true when considering several motifs in the works of Niẓāmī.[32]

Neither these known stories, nor a fairly considerable quantity of traditional narratives, probably also shorter ones, which are unfortunately no longer known or have been lost, could meet the demand for ever new descriptions of likely and unlikely happenings. Writers were therefore obliged to borrow foreign, non-Iranian subject-matter as well.

The most important in this context is the *Alexander Romance* of Pseudo-Callisthenes. Although the Pahlavi version no longer exists, the thoroughly Iranian flavour of the place names and the allusions to Iranian conditions in the Syriac translation of the Pahlavi which we possess, prove its authenticity. In its turn, this Syriac version had a very strong influence on the Arabs, and from them the whole complex of the Alexander romance returned to Persian polite literature.[33]

This presumed Pahlavi version of the Alexander romance is of further importance because it made it possible for the figure of Alexander to be incorporated into the Iranian tradition, that had hitherto been hostile towards it. Ever since, Alexander has undisputedly retained his native right, also in Iranian folk-tradition.

C. IRANIAN SUBJECTS ADOPTED IN ARABIC LITERATURE

It has already been pointed out several times how many Arabic translations there existed of the most diverse Pahlavi texts, especially after the Arabs had subjugated the Iranians. This might suggest that Iranian subjects only reached Arabic literature and the Arabs themselves through the Iranians who had been converted to Islam and had begun to write in Arabic.

In a large number of cases this is indeed true, but it does not apply to the majority. After all, motifs from Iranian folk-literature had been known to the Arabs even before the appearance of Muḥammad. Largely responsible for this were the Lakhmids. The centre of their Arab vassal state, under the suzerainty of the Sasanians, was the Mesopotamian town of Ḥīra. Iranian cultural and literary influences began to be felt here first and Iranian traditions and folk-tales spread thence to the Bedouins. They appealed to these sons of the desert, who did much towards their further propagation.[34]

Among many other pieces of evidence there is a biographer of the Prophet[35] who relates that the merchant Naḍr b. al-Ḥārith al-Abdarī[36] had learnt many Iranian traditions – especially those on the fight between Rustam and Isfandyār – on the lower course of the Euphrates (about 620 A.D. in Ḥīra). By telling these tales Ḥārith had disturbed an audience held by Muḥammad, for which reason the Prophet reproved

him (according to an ancient tradition registered by Muḥammad's interpreters).[37]

A particularly rich and fertile influx of Iranian subjects started however when the Iranians, then only recently converted to Islam, began to contribute to Arabic literature themselves. It need not surprise us that the Iranians, very often without conscious intention, simply retraced the old Iranian traditions. Sometimes this could not even be avoided as Arabic literature until this time had lacked many of the forms which did exist in the initially far more advanced Pahlavi literature. Shortly afterwards a systematic translation of Pahlavi literature was undertaken. Once again this was first and foremost the work of the islamised Iranians; of chief importance among them was Ibn al-Muqaffa' (executed about 143/760).[38]

A no less important result of this trend are the Arab Chronicles. Almost without exception these were written by Iranians in the Arabic language. It is not surprising therefore, that a very large proportion of the motifs and subjects are Iranian, for in those days history was a literary genre rather than a scientific discipline.

Unfortunately only the most important historians writing in Arabic can be mentioned here. They all, whether they were Dainavarī, Ibn Qutayba, Ṭabarī, Mas'ūdī, Tha'ālibī or al-Bīrūnī[39], brought forward the old Iranian traditions as a source of knowledge of the history of their Iranian mother country. Of course we must not forget that they were all in the happy position of being able to draw from the Iranian folk-tradition which was considerably larger in those days, and also from many Pahlavi folk-books and other works which are now lost probably for ever. Certainly the *Khvatāy-nāmak* was not the only source that provided them with stories about the various events in ancient Iranian history, although we must not forget that the Arabic version of the *Khvatāy-nāmak* appeared relatively very early, in several different wordings and in various versions. We are not in a position to give further details of the circumstances under which all of this happened, or of the relationships between the different texts. Another question that will probably have to remain unanswered is at what time the changes were made and whether this was done in the Pahlavi original or not until the Arabic adaptation.[40] In any case there is no doubt that the Pahlavi version of the *Khvatāy-nāmak* really existed in the early days of Arabic rule in the Iranian countries. At the same time, however, this complicates considerably several questions concerning mutual relationships in this matter.[41] In any case the very ancient story on the Archer Ārash-i Shavātīr merits full attention. This subject is not to be found in the works of Firdausī but has been handed down in Arabic literature.[42]

It cannot be stressed too often how invaluable Arabic literature has been for the protection and preservation of pre-Islamic Iranian folk-literature which has been in existence for hundreds, even thousands of years. However paradoxical it may seem, besides using the ancient original recordings, the Persian writers of literary epic poems often turned to the Arabic adaptations of old prose folk-books of the Sasanian period when searching for inspiration for their mainly national heroic poems. Although they did not altogether ignore the suggestions that came to them from oral folk-traditions,

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the influence of the written sources was by far the largest and most penetrating. This need not surprise us, for as more and more of the Iranian countries adopted Islam the number of people able to read the Pahlavi books dwindled, if such did indeed still exist. Every year more and more of these old book fell victim to destruction because, being the products of a heretical way of thinking, they were not considered worth preserving. Eventually they became very rare indeed. In these circumstances it has proved providential and profitable that the Iranian tradition split up into two parts – the religious and the secular, or heroic as it might be called. During the Islamic period the old religious tradition inevitably had to lose its influence and die out. On the other hand, in the secular epic tradition it was enough to make a few small corrections, in themselves of slight consequence. When this had been done the old Iranian folk-stories could be translated into Arabic without any objection, while the Iranian characteristics and philosophical background remained untouched. It is only thanks to this process that the most important and valuable elements of Iranian folk-literature from the Sasanian period did not perish together with the Sasanian empire, but were preserved. After an interval during which the often incomplete and previously inconsistent tradition was able to crystallise and its details to become arranged, it returned by way of the Persian poets to the people from whom it had once originated. We must point out, however, that folk-traditions had been handed down both by word of mouth and by the already discussed means of Arabic versions and translations. It may be true that the material transmitted directly and orally constituted the smaller part and consisted of rather simpler stories, but there can be no doubt at all that even in the most difficult circumstances the Iranians held on to their folk-traditions. The result was that polite literature and folk-literature influenced each other extensively as far as subjects were concerned. However, since various subjects of folklore origin were remodelled to suit the style of belles-lettres and affected folk-literature anew only after this transformation; and since on the other hand it is possible that some works of polite literature may have been composed in a style resembling folklore even though they have in fact no folklore foundation, the solving of problems dealing with precise classification, origin, development and nature of a great many epical subjects has become extremely complicated. The immediate conclusion one reaches is of course that it would be a mistake, groundless and even useless, to try drawing artificial and exact dividing lines between folk-tradition and polite literature. Only the mutual link between the two categories can guarantee the vitality and lasting value of the latter.

D. FOLKLORE FOUNDATIONS OF IRANIAN EPICAL POETRY

It is typical of Iranian folk-tradition as well as of polite literature, particularly of the epics, that there are no single chief heroes. This feature is of course not limited to Iran, for we can find any number of examples in the folk- and polite literatures of other nations. Iranian folk-tradition and polite literature possess a whole group of heroes. Naturally we should not be surprised if at certain periods particular heroes such as Rustam are more prominent than others. It is rather that the entire people is raised to a heroic level, while the individual heroes must be seen as incarnations of the ideas and ideals of the people. This may quite well be the quintessence of the remarkable phenomenon that classical literary works based on folk-literature have even now lost none of their vitality.

There can be no doubt that the *Shāh-nāma*, as far as subject-matter goes, is based on elements borrowed from folk-literature, but the treatment bears the unmistakable signs of polite literature.[43] Firdausī's masterly work, however, can at the same time be regarded as the culmination of a long process of development which in fact continues today. After Firdausī's gigantic creation there can only be question of the completion or elaboration of certain subjects or situations. Some of the episodes were only intimated by Firdausī, or ignored altogether. The point we have just discussed proved fortunate for the authors of the classical Persian literary epics, because we can rightly consider the sources as well as the subjects of all these works written during the century following Firdausī's death as being based on folk-literature.[44]

It seems safe to assume that many multiform and extensive cycles of legends already existed in the days of Anōsharvān and Yazdgird III previous to the codifications known to us today. But the connections between them were perceptible only to a limited extent, in as far as they correspond with the common origin of all folk-tradition. The very carefully thought-out and close relationships between the various Iranian folk-epics which we find after the *Shāh-nāma* codification did not yet exist in the Sasanian period. There were of course a number of cycles of traditions, centred mostly round certain legendary figures who featured as protagonists. Only after the introduction and development of epic cyclisation can the Iranian system of traditions gradually have grown into the worked out multiplicity it has become today.[45]

A result of the composition and development of epic cycles was that epical biographies of individual heroes came into being. After the, mostly isolated, events had been collated and such contradictions as existed in different traditions had been eliminated, the portrait of the hero was further completed by the addition of tales about his birth, childhood, old age and death. But this did not generally take place until a very advanced stage in the development of epical biographies had been reached. Be that as it may, it is always the climax in the tradition that is to be regarded as the original

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starting-point. All other episodes became centred round the nucleus of the epic at a later date. As to the drawing up of genealogical relationships, this is no doubt an even more recent development, for which historical or mythological motifs may be used as a basis. When once a cycle had been established around one of the heroes, this was complemented by degrees by the addition of traditions concerning his ancestors and descendants. It sometimes happens too that folk-tradition utilises previously independent and even non-contemporaneous incidents as rudiments for epic traditions, ignoring differences in time and adapting separate epical elements so as to fit each other. Not infrequently the result is that contradictions and inconsistencies occur in one and the same version and discrepancies between parallel versions.[46]

There is no better proof of the intense effect of the Iranian epic tradition than the fact that many originally epic elements and subjects penetrated also into the non-epic forms of folk-literature, embellished with fairy-tale motifs. Naturally the original character of the one-time epic subject undergoes considerable modification when this happens.[47]

However, the creative efficacy of the Iranian folk-epics was not to be sought only in a downward direction (i.e. in the smaller poetical forms), but also to a very considerable extent in the longer forms. There can hardly be any doubt that in the *Khvatāy-nāmak* many elements were lacking which we do find in the *Shāh-nāma* and which we must regard as being decidedly based on folk-literature. As examples only the most important incidences need be quoted. The entire cycle of epic traditions about Rustam, together with most of the episodes, may quite rightly be regarded as a Sistanian group of traditions; very likely these were once quite independent subjects, perhaps derived from a family chronicle of people who regarded themselves as the descendants of Rustam or at any rate as belonging to his clan.[48] In a similar way other regional subjects, or such as were confined to certain clans, also became part of the system of Iranian folk-tradition. The noble houses of the Arsacids who, as we know, retained their influential position during almost the entire Sasanian period, also contributed several episodes. Nowadays it is hard to find out whether local subjects were included in the traditions by Firdausī himself, or whether this had been done earlier in the oral tradition or in the prose folk-books, none of which exist today, though they were in circulation during the period between the late-Sasanian codification of Iranian traditions in the *Khvatāy-nāmak* and Firdausī's writing of the *Shāh-nāma*, and were even translated into Arabic on more than one occasion.

In any case many of the subjects of the *Shāh-nāma* do not derive from the same source. We must not forget that Firdausī himself was a member of the landed gentry. It is therefore hardly likely that the poet would remain entirely untouched by the ideas and opinions of his social milieu and class; on the contrary, he probably gave preference to a few aristocratic traditions above folk ones here and there, or at least rated them of equal value.

The part of the *Shāh-nāma* concerned with the oldest, mythological period in Iran

was quite certainly founded on the earliest and decidedly popular traditions. In the section devoted to the Sasanians on the other hand, there is a lot of material affected by aristocratic and legitimistic tendencies. It should be noted that as far as is reported by tradition, there were no class conflicts yet up to the time of Ḍaḥḥāk. But as soon as Kāva the Blacksmith[49] (still one of the favourite personages in contemporary Tajik folk-poetry) makes his appearance, we get the first taste of social strife just because of this basic idea – a rising of the masses against tyranny and oppression. The conclusion of the story has distinct legitimistic overtones (and therefore probably expresses Firdausī's personal point of view), for Kāva voluntarily relinquishes to the legitimate ruler Faridūn the real power he had won in battle, in the course of which he had brought about the overthrow and death of the tyrant. It is true that in the later period, in the history of the Sasanians, there are also many obvious folk-subjects and motifs with democratic leanings. Quite a surprising degree of objectivity is shown by the great poet in his description of the Mazdakite revolution, and only his attitude towards Mazdakite ideology reveals his aristocratic viewpoint. Other folk-traditions to be found in Firdausī are those dealing with the character and deeds of certain rulers. He renders the folk-traditions here in a form which, at the most, has been slightly elaborated and developed. Quite often ideas and desires come into play that are typically bound up with the common people, so that the legendary figure differs widely from historical reality and truth.[50] It is one of the peculiar ironies of Fate that a large number of historically important figures, even whole dynasties of rulers, have disappeared without leaving a trace in folk-tradition, while rulers who were in reality comparatively unimportant and had if anything less than average ability became the chief characters of numerous stories and sometimes even of a whole cycle of traditions. An example is Bahrām Gor, and we find something of a similar nature in the *Thousand and One Nights* (Caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd). It would not be difficult to make an impressive list of other instances of this kind in the folk-tales of different nations.

From the earliest times there was a very strong romantic tendency in the Iranian epics, but for a long time it was only used to form episodes. The romantic element was seldom the starting-point for the main action. After the Seljuq invasion, however, there was a radical change of taste in literature – the horrors of real life made people turn away from the destitution of the present and seek solace in often extremely romantic subjects. Great popularity was enjoyed by tales like *Vāmiq and ʿAdhrā*, *Vīs and Rāmīn*[51], and others, which originally belonged to folk-literature but became more and more estranged from it through adaptation, interpretation and through the contents themselves. Finally they lost the last traces of and connections with folk-literature and were transferred completely into the sphere of polite literature, which for the common people remains a strange and remote realm.[52]

Although of course the epic poems composed during the period between the death of Firdausī and the heyday of the romantic epoch cannot generally speaking compete with that great model, the *Shāh-nāma*, either in popularity or in intrinsic quality, they

are of no less value for the study of Iranian folk-literature. As we have mentioned earlier, in the epic poems that appeared after Firdausī several motifs were further developed which he himself had merely indicated. A number of epic cycles now also came into use which Firdausī had either not known about or had deliberately ignored. It is not impossible either that authors who are no longer known today were able to make use of some ancient folk-books. The question whether such works, if they existed at all, were still written in the original Pahlavi or had already been translated into Arabic, is of comparatively little importance. In any case all these epics dating from the period after Firdausī's death prove that a new epic cycle was evolving. The fact that the means of expression of these poets already completely conformed to the requisites of high-aimed literary poetry, does not prove very much. The themes, as well as the way in which they were linked together, remain surprisingly close to the folk-style.[53]

It is a remarkable thing, however, that epic cyclisation retained its viability until comparatively recently. It is typical of the intellectual situation in late-feudal Iran in the 19th century that even figures like Rustam had to be islamised in order to make them acceptable for the narrow-minded and extremely fanatical Mullas. If one had opposed this absurd demand, one would have been in danger of being accused of heresy. Although the islamising of ancient Iranian heroes took place mainly in the smaller literary forms, this makes it no less interesting.[54]

One of the best, and at the same time richly documented examples of epic cyclisation in the field of epic folk-traditions are the various versions of the folk-traditions and legends about Alexander of Macedonia. These are particularly instructive, if only for the reason that we possess a great number of records illustrating very different stages in the development of these traditions. The same cannot be said, however, about the ancient Iranian epic traditions, as in most cases only the fully developed and 'final' versions of specific adaptations are available.

It must be pointed out that the oriental Alexander romances[55] are fundamentally different from the western, and especially the European versions. The Alexander romances of Europe are in the first place to be seen as typical examples of mediaeval romances of adventure and chivalry. What particularly distinguishes the oriental Alexander romances is the prominent position given in them to Alexander and Aristotle, with the result that philosophy and statesmanship become very important elements.

The peoples of the East had no clear notion of the actual events of which Alexander of Macedonia had been the central figure, and it was thus that traditions and legends came into being. Ignorance of the true happenings permitted new details to be added as required. The oriental Alexander romances thus acquired more and more the character of a 'mirror for princes' and may consequently be regarded up to a certain point as a collection of maxims. This increases their importance, for they rate not only as monuments of literature but also as an important source of information about the development of political conceptions.

The memory of Alexander lives on in works of various kinds. A biography proper, such as the one composed and written down by Cleitarch and Onesikritos[56], served as a model for Plutarch as well as for the Greek historiographers. In the East the real biography had a very limited effect. Of much greater appeal were numerous legends, which however bore little relation to the actual events.

The various traditions survived independently until the time of the later Roman emperors. As we know, it was the Roman rulers Caracalla and Alexander Severus who established the official Alexander cult that led to the systematic arrangement and completion of the Alexander traditions. The actual Alexander romance was at first attributed to Callisthenes, physician-in-ordinary to the famous king of the Macedonians, but it became evident that it must have been the work of some anonymous author – known therefore as Pseudo-Callisthenes. He may not even have been a Greek, but perhaps Egyptian by birth. The romance presents Alexander as a descendant of the Egyptian pharaohs, for according to the legend he was not the son of Philip of Macedon but of an Egyptian priest named Nektanebus – himself ultimately related to the kings. Thus Alexander appears not as an usurper, but as the legitimate heir to the royal power. The original Egyptian version would seem to be devoid of allusions to internal conditions and relationships in Macedonia, these having only been introduced in the Greek adaptation. In its turn this Greek version was the model for many an oriental redaction. Particularly important among these is the Middle-Persian Pahlavi version, and although it has not survived there is ample evidence that it must have existed, for there are Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopian and Armenian translations of the Alexander romance. The translators certainly handled their model in very free fashion; they inserted, altered and even omitted passages. In most cases, however, the main course of the story was preserved. The chief evidence that the versions we have just mentioned are founded on the Middle-Persian and not on the Greek translation of the romance, is contained in the ethnonymics etc. Among other peoples, mention is made of Turanians, Alans, Gubardebayis, Azerbayjanians, Tabaristanis and Gurganis. These names were well known to the Iranians in particular, and further show that the Persian translator, or rather adaptor, was well acquainted with Trans-Caucasia and the south coast of the Caspian Sea.

Initially the Zoroastrian priesthood was an arch-enemy of the memory of Alexander whom they regarded as a descendant of the infernal powers. This ancient belief and attitude is illustrated in the *Artāk-Virāz-nāmak*.

A change in the conception of the Alexander figure (already evident at the time of the Sasanians, but even more strongly pronounced during the hegemony of the caliphate) was motivated far more by political than by religious considerations. Because the authority of the *Farr*-theory was at stake, the high Iranian aristocracy could not rest content with this attitude of rejection. For political reasons they were forced to effect the transmission of the *Farr* in some acceptable manner. A starting-point in this direction was the romance of Pseudo-Callisthenes. The Middle-Persian

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version – if not directly evoked for this purpose – enabled both the official historiographers and folk-tradition to place Alexander in an admissible genealogical relationship to the Achaemenids (as far as they were still remembered). Alexander thus became a legitimate heir to the throne. In the *Khvadāy-nāmak*, the official chronicle of the Sasanians, he is at any rate already portrayed as the evident legal successor to the Achaemenids. Arabic chronicles, as well as the *Shāh-nāma*, which have undoubted connections with some versions of the *Khvadāy-nāmak*, also give evidence of this new conception of Alexander.[57]

The ways and methods by which the Alexander traditions were introduced into Iranian folk-literature are also most instructive from other points of view. For since we have a pretty good knowledge of the true background of the legends, we are here able to assess how great can be the anachronisms that appear, as well as erroneous historical data, and how folk-traditions can be distorted. In this respect, the discrepancies between folk-traditions and historical facts are rightly to be seen as an instructive admonition that the evidence of folk-tradition should always be used with the greatest caution and even reserve as a source of true historical information. Although therefore the historical reliability of folk-traditions is obviously very slight, particularly as regards very early times, they are nevertheless of lasting value as one of the best sources of information on the cultural development of a nation and of its psychology.

Generally speaking we can nowadays distinguish the following groups of subjects in Iran itself: an ancient mythological group – obviously of folk-origin, strongly influenced by many and nowadays often obscure traditions of a religious and even partly pre-Zoroastrian nature; then a cycle with Alexander as central character – of a much later date and in several respects romantic and fantastic; and finally a Sasanian group, in itself very varied, since it embraces both folk and aristocratic traditions; next to heroic and epic elements we also find romantic ones. It frequently happens that a subject is productive in more than one way – it is remarkable enough that several typically Achaemenid subjects were transferred to the Sasanians. This would finally also justify the assumption that there was once a time when the so-called West-Iranian epic subjects were not confined to those recorded by the ancient Greek authors, but were also handed down in the folk-tradition, and were at least known to the ruling classes.

Another interesting fact is that numerous traditions, and even cycles of traditions, were also centred around real historical personages such as Rūdakī, Firdausī[58], Maḥmūd of Ghazna[59], and others. These are usually romantic and are often presented in the form of anecdotes. The *Gūrughlī* epic cycle will be discussed later. It seems appropriate, however, to point out here that throughout Iran there exists an immense number of local traditions and legends connected either with a particular building or neighbourhood.[60] In many countries, Afghanistan for instance, they were even to a certain extent cyclised.[61]

E. FOLKLORE FOUNDATIONS OF IRANIAN ROMANTIC EPICS

The increasing part played by romantic as compared to heroic elements in both polite and folk-literature was mainly conditioned by the political situation, ultimately also by the decline brought about by the Mongol invasion and the devastation it left in its train. Under such conditions heroic legends – which even now are still being related – must sometimes have appeared as bitter anachronisms. Indeed on occasions a poet or folk-singer would have been risking his life if he had dared to recount or record a new adaptation or conception of old traditional motifs. Such an undertaking might easily be seen as at attempt at allegory, and consequently as an incitement against the current oppressors or as an expression of confidence in their impermanence. This was why both literary and folk-poets preferred to steer clear of subjects uncongenial to the times and complied rather with the tastes of the moment. Moreover, it was not very difficult to find suitable subjects and motifs in the various folk-traditions which no one had hitherto exploited or which had only been used in a small way in episodes.

Thus one of the best loved and most widely known subjects is without doubt that of *Farhād and Shīrīn*. Almost all the Turkic peoples adopted this romantic subject from the Iranians, and in polite as well as folk-literature it has been used in a great variety of ways. Oddly enough it does not appear in Arabic literature, with the exception of a single shadow play (and then probably under Turkish influence).[62]

As early as the end of the Sasanian rule the romantic tradition of *Farhād and Shīrīn* was one of the most popular subjects in profane entertainment literature.[63] Strictly speaking this tale was only an episode in the popular cycle of traditions about Khusrau and Shīrīn, which in its turn is merely a fragment of the extensive traditional series about several of the Sasanian rulers. The two thematic groups – Farhād and Shīrīn, and Khusrau and Shīrīn – gradually moved apart until they eventually became almost independent of each other. It is characteristic of the attitude in folk-literature that tragic conflicts are so often brought to a happy ending.

The story of *Farhād and Shīrīn* is, however, far from being the only romantic subject in Iranian folk-literature. Particularly in Central Asia, where the sphere of influence of Iranian subjects reached far beyond its natural ethnic boundaries, other subjects were in evidence too, some of which we know from Persian polite literature.[64]

Judged as a whole, Iranian folk-literature of post-classical times shows a preference for erotic subjects in place of the earlier heroic ones. Tragic love stories in romantic style abound. Although the prevailing mood of nearly all the subjects of the period is tragic, this can hardly be regarded as an expression of general pessimism – we should see it rather as a sign of certain personal and, even more, social antagonisms of the time.

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The subjects, which in the main do not differ very widely from those of the European versions of Romeo and Juliet or Tristan and Isolde, were treated to all kinds of variations and underwent many a metamorphosis. Of course in the East these tales became greatly popularised, even in adaptations for polite literature, which in their turn often re-affected folk-literature. Perhaps it is due to such counter-effects and mutual influences that these love-stories became such firm favourites in the East – much more so than in the European West where they were claimed almost exclusively by polite literature, although in the end here too they became the possessions of nearly all nations and national literatures.

One truly international story – for once not of Iranian but of Arabic origin – is that concerning the unhappy love of *Laylī and Majnūn*, which became very popular as early as the 11th century. The first ambitious version in polite literature comes from Niẓāmī. Until then the Arabs themselves evidently did not possess any major poetic versions of this tale. Although the subject most likely dates back to the end of the 7th century A.D. and at the time of Niẓāmī could look back on nearly 500 years of remarkable development, the history of its evolution even among the Arabs is somewhat obscure and enigmatical. This a is good example of how an unfortunate combination of circumstances can provide literary history with vexatious problems. In cases such as this, one is reduced to conjecture.[65]

Equally popular and widely known among the romantic-erotic folk-epics are the stories of *Ṭāhir and Zuhrā*[66] (about a predestined but undesired marriage), *Bahrām and Gulandām*[67] and of *Yūsuf and Zalīkhā*[68] (an old oriental theme, here according to the well-known Koran version). There are, however, vast numbers of other tales whose subjects are familiar among all Islamic nations of the East. The story of *Varqa and Gul-shāh*, written down by 'Ayyūqī, also belongs to this group. A parallel to this Iranian version of a non-Iranian subject is known in Europe too, notably in the old French mediaeval romance of *Floire et Blancheflor* (with many variants, even folk-books).[69]

An important circumstance worth remembering is that in the Near East mediaeval Iran held a similar position to mediaeval France in Europe. Both countries must be seen as the birth-places of romances of chivalry and chivalrous poetry (known in the West under such general terms as mediaeval German love-poetry, *Minnesang*, and troubadour and minstrel poetry).[70] Prose romances of chivalry started to be written in Iran as early as the 12th century.

In their early stages of development at any rate, Iranian romances of chivalry did not attempt to break away from folk-literature, despite the social circles they clearly portrayed. On the contrary, they made use of a lot of folklore material, particularly its imaginative and folk-tale elements. Individual subjects later developed independently along their own lines.[71]

It is always useful to pay some attention to at least some of the examples of Persian literary prose, since folk-literature has left its mark here too.

In Persian literary prose, unlike verse adaptations, we certainly find a fair medley of ancient Iranian epical elements, indisputably Arabic and Moslem chivalrous subjects, numerous legends (versions either taken from the Koran or related to the Jewish tradition), as well as romantic-erotic intrigues. The episodes are mostly strongly reminiscent of folk-tales with *dēvs, parīs,* demons, fairies, sorcerers and sorcereresses, and are thus not very far removed from folk-literature. These features can be found in the oldest known prose epic work of Iran, entitled *Kitāb-i Samak-i ʿAyyār.*[72] The ancient Iranian epic subjects were independently worked out by Abū Ṭāhir Ṭarsūsī. In any case it is interesting to note that he did not combine his romances into one epic cycle, as did Firdausī. Various kinds of folk-books seem to have originated in this genre of romantic epic. Not even the anonymous four-volume *Sikandar-nāma*[73] was without associations and subsequent influence.

A very important group of subjects is furnished by the *Hamza-nāma.* The Islamic romance of chivalry entitled *Qiṣṣa-i Shāh-i mardān ʿAlī*[74], with the fourth caliph as protagonist, is known in one single manuscript only. It is thus very hard to conjecture about its influence on religious folk-literature in the period that followed, but such a work was probably not the only one *sui generis* and was most likely influenced by the epic folk-tradition. It should also just be mentioned that there were some early and late prose versions of the *Shāh-nāma* in existence, and that these served partly as sources for folk-poets and folk-narrators.[75] There were also various versions of *Abū-Muslim-nāma*[76], especially in Central Asia.

Apart from the above-mentioned prose epics there are also several prose works of a didactic and historical content that must be taken into consideration as sources of Iranian folklore motifs and traditions. There is a whole wealth of tales recorded in the historical chronicles composed by Balʿamī, Narshakhī and other very famous authors. At least the fundamental motifs, and even in some cases complete tales, appear certainly to originate and to find their prototypes in folk-literature. Much interesting material for comparative studies may also be found in geographical literature, such as the *ʿAjā'ibu'l-buldān* by Abu'l-Muʿayyad Balkhī.[77]

Far greater approval and success than was met with by the mostly rambling and voluminous romances of chivalry, from which folk-literature could at the most re-borrow episodes only (although professional narrators probably took more from their literary models), we find given to the shorter compositions, which generally abounded in romantic motifs and fantasy. One of the best examples is the story of *Prince Sayfu'l-mulūk and Princess Badīʿu'l-jamāl.* It appears in many short rather than long versions. In this way many subjects that were most likely Iranian themes from *A Thousand and One Nights* returned to polite literature and folk-literature.[78] Here too there are many points of contact between polite and folk-literature, for one is sometimes tempted to suspect that written stories are really the recordings of old oral folk-traditions. In this respect it is certainly true that the study of the history of Persian literature is still in its first stages, and no doubt many problems remain to be solved.

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Ascetic echoes of mediaeval European romances of chivalry (separations and heartbreak, great penances) are also not alien to the classical literary poetry of the Moslem east, especially when Ṣūfī mysticism comes into play. Many such incidences occur in the literary adaptations of *Laylī and Majnūn* and *Farhād and Shīrīn*. They are generally absent, however, in folk-literature and romances of chivalry as well as in the paraphrases of isolated Arabic motifs, since such sentiments are contrary to the general optimism of the common people with their inclination for a full and active life, no matter how hard conditions may be.[80]

Popular tendencies, specifically a true feeling for democracy and a clearly defined social attitude, are not always equally evident. Whereas in the heroic epics the personal opinions of the story-teller or poet are in most cases fairly clearly expressed, progressive tendencies are far less obvious in the romances, and particularly in the romances of chivalry and chivalrous tales – rather the reverse is true.

F. THE *GŪRUGHLĪ* EPIC CYCLE AND OTHER SUBJECTS OF IRANIAN FOLK-EPICS

Continual feudal conflicts, the complete decline of every form of state authority and the club-law of the strongest and most powerful were everywhere – also outside Central Asia – the real causes of rebellious movements.[81] The rebel groups were always more closely connected with the common people, from whom their ranks were recruited, than to the feudal and wealthy classes. On the whole the attitude expressed in folk-literature towards the rebels was not one of repudiation on principle, and it is therefore understandable how the latter soon came to be idealised in it. Impartial and critical opinions or objective judgments of rebellious disturbances are nowhere expressed.

In the first place one has to remember that the epic cycle of rebel traditions and tales, named after its chief hero Gūrughlī[82], is definitely East-Turkish, or to be more precise Turkmenian. Indeed the fact that Gūrughlī epic tales are to be found in Tajik folk-tradition is sufficient evidence that after the severing of connections with Western Iran, Tajik cultural life was closely linked with the cultural activities of the neighbouring East-Turkish peoples, especially the Uzbeks and the Turkmenians.

The folk-epics named after Gūrughlī were known in several versions in Tajikistan[83] – the North-Tajik one being in prose (probably under influence of the neighbouring Uzbek version) and the others in verse-form, in accordance with Iranian preference. The *Gūrughlī* verses are not metrical but quantitative. Like the *Shāh-nāma*, the *Gūrughlī* epics were recited or sung in a peculiar manner with the singer accompanying himself on a *dūtār*.[84] The audience, usually numbering twenty to thirty, were seated in a closed circle around the singer, and would on occasions listen to him for seven or

eight hours without a pause. The recitative is sung in a fast rhythm, the plot is quickly unravelled and the singer's performance assumes an ecstatic quality – a typical case of improvisation.

It is interesting that Gūrughlī himself, just like Kaykā'ūs in the *Shāh-nāma,* or Vladimir in the Russian *Bïlinas,* does not usually take part in the actions, campaigns and battles. Generally Gūrughlī plays an active role only in the framing story which connects the separate episodes. The singer, *sāqī,* has an analogous function in an epic cycle.

In brief the basic plot of the *Gūrughlī* epic cycle is as follows: the existence of the imaginary land of justice and labour, known as Chambūl or Chambīl, is threatened by the attacks of a number of aggressors and royal tyrants, in particular by Kishvar Pādishāh, Turāb and Raiḥān-'arab (the last possibly recalls the erstwhile Arab invasion?). The foreign enemies are joined by traitors from the local nobility, as an example of whom Aḥmad-Khān is mentioned. These internal enemies are maybe also brought forward as a personification of class antagonisms. The people of Chambūl defend themselves, however, under the leadership of their heroes, repel the attack and preserve their liberty. Truth and justice triumph. An important figure in the epic cycle is Āvāz (sometimes called Āvāz-Khān), not a nobleman but the son of a butcher. The antagonism existing between the common people and the aristocracy is clearly expressed in a large number of episodes, whether we take for example the choice of a legitimate (viz. possessing the *farr*) king from among the peasants, or the many meetings in battle between Āvāz-Khān and Aḥmad-Khān. Another instance is when Aḥmad-Khān jeers at the 'lowly origin' of the Gūrughlī-sulṭān, who had formerly been a shepherd.

Owing to the fact that the recording of the *Gūrughlī* cycle has really only just been started, it is difficult to assess the size of the whole epic work and all its cycles. Neither are we yet certain of the number of songs (named *dāstān*), but in total there are undoubtedly many more than 100,000 verses. Some songs consist of 6000 verses, others of a mere thousand or less. As for the number of songs, some people guess at twenty, but an estimate of almost fifty also seems justifiable. Altogether we have here an enormous wealth of orally transmitted folk-literature. If we further add the various by no means small cycles of folk-traditions about Rustam, Siyāvush[85], Isfandyār and other heroes, the number of orally transmitted folk-epics of the Tajiks becomes quite amazing in its size and variety.

For all this the *Gūrughlī* epics should certainly not be regarded as a completed and terminated epic formation. Quite recently a new cycle came into being whose subject is the sketch of the *bāsmachī* movement and the resistance offered to it.[86] How very much alive the *Gūrughlī* epic cycle is from Azerbayjan to Tajikistan is proved, among other things, by the fact that Uzeyir Hajïbeyow[87] set to music a libretto by Mamed Seid Ordubadï for the opera *Köroghlï,* which became a great favourite with the people.

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The *Köroghlï* epic traditions have indeed acquired a considerable degree of internationality throughout the Near East, despite differences of language, religion and cultural development of the various peoples.

Obviously the *Köroghlï* subjects, which are known to so many nations, are by no means identical everywhere. One can easily distinguish the different directions in which the same subjects developed.

The most ancient are the *Gürughlï* subjects in Azerbayjan, especially those that originated in the Persian South-Azerbayjan. These appear still to reflect in parts the real historical background of the separate epical episodes.

In the Azerbayjan version Köroghlï is a rebel from Turkmenistan, therefore of nomadic origin. To the popular way of thinking the brave Jighit Köroghlï is not a brutal perpetrator of outrages but merely an enemy of the rich, the powerful and the high-born, and at the same time the protector of the poor.[88] Only in love does he behave aristocratically; his following, however, consists entirely of common folk. There are several details which the Azerbayjan version shares with the Ukrainian Ataman Mazeppa.[89] When Köroghlï was made into an epic personage, it is also very likely that the classical example of all Islamic heroes, the great Rustam, was not without influence. Nevertheless there are also pronounced differences. Rustam is presented as a loyal and devoted knight in the true feudal sense, Köroghlï on the other hand is a warrior who values his love of freedom and his word of honour above all else.[90]

The Azerbayjan variant of the *Köroghlï* traditions has very close connections with the other Trans-Caucasian and Near-Eastern versions, which differ from that of Azerbayjan only to the extent that they are less historical in character and already contain several fictitious episodes. This is particularly true of the Turkish version, in which the gradual transition from semi-historical account to folk-romance of chivalry has started.

The *Central Asian Goroghlï dāstāns* also have their own specific characteristics; they differ significantly from the first, Azerbayjan group. To this second, Central Asian, series belong the Turkmenian, Uzbek, Tajik and Kazakh versions. This last-named group has reached a very advanced stage in epic development, for, besides *dāstāns*, folk-tales with Köroghlï motifs have also become part of the tradition. The result is a complete disintegration of the epical texture. Despite, or perhaps because of this, the Köroghlï subjects cannot hold their own against the older epic cycles in Kazakhstan and never achieved the hegemony they customarily enjoy elsewhere.

The Azerbayjan and Uzbek *Köroghlï* versions (to mention the best-known) can thus be regarded as opposite examples of how a common model may be developed. Concerning the Uzbek version we have to remember, of course, that although it is cyclised to a high degree, it does not yet constitute a closed constructed system of epic traditions. Orally transmitted folk-epics never present a consistent biography. This is impossible from the outset because the subject-repertoires of the various folk-singers

are never exactly the same, and do not agree on details but only in general outline and chief characteristics. Nothing else could be expected under the circumstances. Gradually, however, the epic biography is being pieced together, and here too genealogical cyclisation is gradually being achieved.

As we have already pointed out, the Uzbek cycle of *dāstāns* with Goroghlï as chief character has definitely travelled a long way in the development from tradition to epic cycle, or rather folk-romance of chivalry with many fictional features, especially if compared with the older and perhaps still semi-historical Azerbayjan version.

The Goroghlï of the Uzbek version is neither rebel nor singer, but of noble birth and excellent parentage, a Turkmenian or Uzbek *beg*. He is the lawful ruler of a country; under his wise leadership the people prosper and when occasion arises attacks from the enemy are repelled. Goroghlï thus becomes the model for rulers and leaders of the people. The creative imagination of the folk-singers made the brave Jighit Goroghlï into an epic hero similar in type to Charlemagne. His wives are no longer daughters of khāns and *begs*, but beautiful fairies from the imaginary land of Kuykōf. Goroghlï was even invested with magical powers. But even this did not satisfy the unbridled imagination, for an Uzbek religious legend declares that Goroghlï enjoyed the special protection of the Prophet Khiḍr and the Forty Saints. Finally, in another religious tradition he is identified with the holy caliph ʿAlī – he was held to be the sacred ʿAlī of his age. The whole Uzbek epic cycle therefore resembles much more a folk-romance of chivalry, often with mystical overtones and deformations, while sometimes even Shīʿite traits can be found.

This excessive idealisation of the Goroghlï figure started in Turkmenistan. At the same time several very ancient, even mythological elements became incorporated in the epic cycle – among other things a new interpretation of the name Goroghlï. The original Azerbayjan explanation was that the name Köroghlï meant 'Son of the Blind One', but in the Uzbek version another interpretation prevailed, namely that it should be understood as 'Son of the Grave'. One tradition, very well known throughout Central Asia, maintains that Goroghlï was born in a grave after his mother was already dead. In this context the Tajik view is distinctly strange. On the one hand Gūrughlï is interpreted as 'Son of the Grave', in agreement with the Uzbek tradition, but at the same time the older Azerbayjan explanation 'Son of the Blind One' is retained. In addition the two versions are linked together in Tajik tradition, so that they become parts of the same tradition. The Uzbeks have yet another legend about the childhood of Goroghlï – that the son of the dead mother was kept alive by being suckled by a mare from Rustam's stables.[91] Parallel motifs are not hard to find – out of the many we need only mention two specifically: Cyrus was suckled by a bitch[92], Romulus and Remus by a she-wolf.[93] That the Gūrughlï epic traditions were developed within the different peoples is shown by further peculiarities. While in the Azerbayjan group of versions Köroghlï's followers consisted entirely of adventurers (usually forty in number) who had turned their backs on an unsympathetic society, in the Uzbek

version he is surrounded by a retinue in entirely feudal and unromantic fashion which he had moreover inherited from his father. Generally speaking the Central Asian versions are less revolutionary in their ideology than are those of Azerbayjan. The attitude of the common people is also less evident in the East. However, the undoubtedly progressive leading idea of the entire *Gūrughlī* epic cycle – namely the struggle of the people against mainly foreign oppression – loses none of its force and is everywhere maintained.

From the point of view of form the various versions differ considerably. Prose predominates among the Azerbayjanis and Turkmenians, verse being used only for the occasional songs of the hero. The Uzbeks have mainly poetical adaptations, the Kazakhs almost exclusively so, and with the Tajiks it has become a hard and fast rule.

As we said earlier, most Central-Asian versions must be considered more recent – they date from the 18th and the first half of the 19th century. Single episodes that were possibly derived from other epic cycles, however, may be considered much older.[94]

Although *Gūrughlī* epic traditions play such an important part in Tajik folk-poetry, they are by no means its only product. Older by many centuries are the most diverse traditions about Rustam and Isfandyār, Ḍaḥḥāk, and Kāva the Blacksmith.[95]

All the types of epic subjects we have so far discussed can be divided into diverse categories. Folk-literature has a very stimulating influence on polite literature. Its motifs are ultimately linked into elaborated compositions and cyclisations, either in epic biographies of single heroes or in genealogical cyclisation and biographies of their ancestors and descendants. The *Gūrughlī* subjects form another, less rigidly cyclised group, in which single episodes sometimes retain a measure of independence although most of the contradictions and inconsistencies have already been smoothed out. The Rustam epic traditions, in so far as they still survive in folk-literature, display even more liberties in the linking together of separate motifs. Here it is often a case of epic traditions turning into a folk-tale. The epical texture became disintegrated.

Besides the epic traditions we have discussed, there are also other, minor forms. Often it is difficult to draw the line between folk-sagas and folk-tales.

These epical fragments vary considerably in character. Sometimes they are local traditions about the founding or fall of a city, or they consist of heroic traditions recalling the one-time inhabitants of some castle or other. There is hardly a bridge, tower, castle, bazaar, caravanserai, canal or any other structure that has not at least one legend connected with it. Similarly places of pilgrimage, mountains and caves (these last often served as hiding-places) and archeological sites (Bīsutūn among others) have their own traditions too, which moreover were formerly frequently misinterpreted.[96] Such folk-traditions connected with specific places can be divided into two groups: the first are old heroic, perhaps also totemic, traditions; the second are Islamic legends, the acting characters often being contemporaries of the story-teller, which makes the plot entirely topical.

The most diverse traditions appear side by side in motley profusion. Of very great age is certainly the Soghdian-Scythian tale of *King Sugdyn and his daughter Zarrīna* with its very remarkable counterpart, the Tajik heroic tale of *Bahādur and Zarrīna,* which is richly embellished with fantasy motifs. It is fitting to mention this Tajik version here[98], not only on account of a number of East-Iranian myths which were used in it very effectively, but also because it contains some very beautiful fragments indicative of an uncommonly high degree of reverence and respect for women. The Tajik version is of great importance because it has preserved such typical memories of matriarchal times (The Battle of the Women!), and has several points of contact with the – nowadays Qaraqalpaq – heroic tradition *Qïrq Qïz,* 'Forty Maidens', the origin of which is probably to be sought in very ancient times, in the days of Saka hegemony in Central Asia.[99] Further influence from the numerous Amazon traditions may not be excluded, though as such they appear in a very rudimentary form. Of great age are the ancient-Khvarazmian *Siyāvush-legends,* and others of a similar character.[100] A slightly different case form the many traditions of legendary character which centre around famous historical figures. Sometimes these have become anecdotes, but very often they have turned into genuine epic tales. There are legends about Muqanna'[101] and Navā'ī[102], while stories of the persecution of Nāṣir-i Khusrau[103] can also be found. No less popular, however, are the many legends about Firdausī and other poets of the classical period.[104] Sulṭān Maḥmūd of the Ghaznavids is another personage who turns up regularly in different traditions, the historical accuracy of which, however, leaves much to be desired. Among the Shī'ites there is an immense number of the most diverse and generally highly fantastic legends about the 'Alīids, which may have served to a certain extent as models for later dramatic adaptations. The Sunnites, on the other hand, are extremely fond of anecdotes and legends about the caliphs.

Finally it is difficult to imagine that not a little local tradition seeped into already completed epic cycles, particularly those of the later authors. This is indeed the case with the later versions of the Alexander romance. At any rate the poet cut his model into a fashionable shape and adapted it where necessary to contemporary conditions. Baluchi[105] and Kurd[106] folk-traditions – and the same goes for other Iranian peoples – are of some importance in so far as they reveal such phases in the development of Iranian folk-literature that have not been preserved elsewhere owing to the strong influence of the poet's individuality or because they were superseded by advanced and complicated systems of traditions. But here too the influence of the Persian literary language and polite literature proved stronger in the majority of cases, unfortunately even predominant, while at the same time folk-literature itself was held in such contempt that we have found quite a number of records in one dialect or another – though not all of them are new – of subjects which are unknown elsewhere.

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G. THE OSSETIAN NART SAGAS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE

We have already mentioned a few Scythian traditions in ancient Greek records. Unfortunately neither the remaining early Scythian traditions nor their Middle Scythian versions have come down to us, so that it is extremely difficult to find out exactly how the Ossetian Nart epics developed.[107] These compositions may be seen as the latest phases of evolution in North-Iranian epics. Since up to a fairly late date the Ossetians possessed no written polite literature, the intellectual influence of folk-singers[108] was uncommonly great and the heroic epics dealing with the Narts were free to develop for centuries without interruption. The oldest traditions about the Narts are assumed to date back to the 8th century B.C., which already partially fills the gap in the tradition we have just mentioned. Most of the Ossetian sagas, however, are considerably younger, the most recent of them dating from around the 14th century A.D., although it is not impossible that in the later versions a lot of old traditions survived, even if in a more fully developed form. The Ossetian Nart sagas were of great importance for the Ossetian people: they took the place of literature and history and became the school for popular knowledge. It is owing to countless Ossetian bards that this veritable treasury of folk-tradition has survived the centuries, and what is more, retained such a surprisingly convincing artistic and inventive unity. Since the history of the Ossetians has not yet been fully investigated, it is impossible to be sure how faithfully the Ossetian sagas on the Narts relate the real history of this people, but the core at least is definitely historical. Social changes that took place over the many centuries of development of these traditions, are reflected clearly enough. The Nart folk-epics have preserved a fairly faithful description of the ideology and intellectual disposition of their creators up to the present time.

The earliest Nart sagas go back to matriarchal society. The tales that form the core of the epic contain memories of conditions as they were in early patriarchal society with very clear traces of the old matriarchy still present. In the oldest saga cycles (*Warkhag and his Sons, Shatana and Wryzmag*) we can still find reminiscences of the social, family and conjugal relationships which preceded patriarchal and monogamous family arrangements. In the Shatana sagas, for example, there are many allusions which can only be understood in relation to the matriarchal form of marriage. Shatana lived with her own kinsfolk, her brother Wryzmag was at the same time her husband; she was held in great respect and had great influence in public life, in fact she played a leading part among the Narts. No remotely comparable evidence of such ancient and remarkable customs is to be found in all of the other Iranian folk-epics put together.

Of course the Nart epics also reflect later stages of social development. The most recent subjects already show signs of antagonism to the growing feudal society of the

Ossetians. We hear about conflicts between the Narts and the Aldars (i.e. the nobility).[109] Economic relations within the bounds of concrete society also gradually changed. In this context we ought not to be surprised when mythology is often called in to explain professional specialisation and also certain branches of industry. Among others the Ossetians provide a charming myth that strongly reminds us of the well-known Prometheus legend.[110]

The Ossetian Nart sagas have reached us in the form of isolated traditions. These separate sagas, however, centre round individual heroes in cycles, while the heroes have been brought into relationship with one another. Despite their independence, all the sagas are linked together to make a perfect organic whole.

The following groups of sagas may be regarded as the chief cycles: *Warkhag and his Sons, Wryzmag and Shatana, Soslan, Syrdon, Khamyts and Batradz, Atsamaz*; as well as these there are some smaller cycles and even isolated subjects. The final song on the decline of the Narts declares emphatically that they chose death and everlasting glory above everlasting but inglorious life.

The Ossetian Nart epics are remarkable for their monumental descriptions, brief but penetrating characterisations, simple but clever presentations, effective dramatisation, and also humour. We have already mentioned the faithful presentation of the changes in ideology which occurred in the course of history. Indeed the Narts always had very definite and concrete ideas about both natural phenomena and social issues, and they never ceased to emphasise the importance of creative activity.

It is true that the Nart sagas are also to be found, in varying forms, among other Caucasian peoples, but nowhere else did they equal the Ossetian prototypes in their degree of perfection, in variety and sheer number.[111]

On the other hand it is not inconceivable that the Nart sagas played their part in the development of the heroic legends and cults in ancient Greece – still of course in some rudimentary form which disappeared long ago and was superseded in the course of history. The frequency with which Caucasian motifs turn up in Greek mythology seems to indicate such.[112]

The current dispute on the ethnological origin of the Caucasian Nart traditions is closely connected with an analysis of the ethnogenetical processes that have resulted in the present-day Ossetians. Of course the Scythian question is far from having been completely and satisfactorily solved. The Iranian character of the contemporary Ossetian ethnos is quite certain and beyond dispute, even the Caucasian substratum has been definitively established. Ossetian folk-tradition, moreover, was islamised only to a slight extent, a fact that is of great significance for the comparative study of Iranian folk-literature. The fact that the Scythians were ancestors to the present-day Ossetians as well as partially to the Tajiks is another reason for taking an interest in Ossetian folk-epics.

To summarise it may be stated that the Ossetian folk epics reached a degree of cyclisation comparable to that of the folk-epics in Iran proper at the time before the

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Sasanian codification. It may be added that certain Ossetian subjects also found their way into smaller poetical forms as well as folk-tales. Modern Ossetian polite literature too very often makes use of them.

H. THE *DĀSTĀNS* – THEIR DEVELOPMENT AND CONNECTIONS

The *dāstāns* can properly be considered as an intermediate form between epics, narrative literature and folk-tales.

According to Romaskevich[113] the story-teller Juhūnvāz from Ardakān, near Shīrāz, used to hold sessions lasting several evenings during which he recited various tales, mostly related to each other through the main plot and common personages, interrupting the sequence with appropriate songs. This narrative style, in which the main story is interspersed with episodes and poetical interludes, is still alive and continues to be productive today not only among the Iranians but also among the Uzbeks and in other places in the Islamic east. The best example of this narrative technique for sheer size and number of variations, is really the *Book of a Thousand and One Nights.*

The element of imagination was developed in folk-romances of chivalry and particularly in the *dāstāns* under the direct influence of folk-tales. It is especially evident in *dāstāns* with a highly romantic subject. The exuberant fantasy to be found in the *dāstāns* is definitely not directly related to pre-Islamic superstitions and myths (though a few exceptions only prove the rule), nor to rites and customs of ancient times. As we have already said, most of it was derived from folk-tales, but in the *dāstāns* fantasy serves only as an attractive embellishment to the tale.[114] It is not determined by the earlier development of the subject, as in the case of fairy-tales.

The subjects of the *dāstāns* are noted for their very considerable variety. Besides the heroic epics we often find romantic epics with a substantial share of erotic subjects; sometimes they are penetrated by subjects of a novelistic character. These smaller epical forms are always full of exuberant imagination. The *dāstāns* very often used to be shaded with elegiac, sometimes even tragic tones.

A little tragedy in verse form is the *Tale of Mame and Ayshe.*[115] Kurdic *dāstāns* also contain other subjects.[116] Very well known is the *Tale of Aḥmad-Khān Lab-zerrīne,* the heroic defender of the fortress Dīm-dīm (with the Mukrī Kurds)[117],while the romantic tale of *Mamu and Zinē*[118] is generally popular. Apart from many other original subjects, no less in favour are the *dāstāns* on Rustam, influenced by the Persian *Shāh-nāma,* and those on Antar with subjects borrowed from the famous romance of chivalry of the same name.[119]

The Afghan *dāstāns* are of the heroic as well as the romantic type. They are written either in verse form or in prose, sometimes with verse interpolations. The latter are really of an intermediate type and form a transition to folk-tales. All categories of Afghan *dāstāns* are distinctly related to historical events and to the social development of the Afghan tribes. Besides the heroic tale on *Fātiḥ-Khān Baretsay*[120], the romantic story of the tender love between *Ādam-Khān and Durrkhāniy*[121] also enjoys popularity. The same applies to the tale on the gay *Dilyāy and his sweetheart Shahō*[122] and other similar subjects. Somewhat different are the historical songs, not only as regards their poetical form but also their content. They sing of concrete historical events and can be strictly dated as well as grouped into several cycles.[123] The songs on romantic subjects are closely connected with the prose-tales.[124]

The subjects of the Baluchi *dāstāns*[125] are either historical (e.g. the *Wanderings of the Rind-Baluchis*[126], the *Quarrel of Mīr Chākar and Gvaharām*[127]) or of the romantic type, for instance *Dōstēn and Shīrēn*.[128]

We can safely say that the *dāstāns* form the building material for more extensive epical compositions. Certainly the circumstances surrounding their development and the conditions under which this took place varied greatly, and evolution was mostly gradual and slow. Traces of this development have been relatively well preserved, although in the majority of cases we do not possess examples of all the phases. If we sum up all the facts mentioned here, we are bound to conclude that the great epic masterpieces of Persian polite literature are far more closely linked with folk-literature than was formerly supposed; the relationship between polite literature and folk-literature is far more profound, important and intense, the author's personal contribution to the composition, development and motivation much smaller, while the influence of folk-literature is far more extensive and penetrating than would appear at a first glance. Oddly enough the length of a story appears to be in inverse proportion to the number of motifs used. Minor poetical forms reveal a frankly prodigious wealth of the most heterogeneous motifs, while epic cycles pick out only the most suitable. One might put it this way: that the great epic works of polite literature canonised only a few of the 'classical' subjects ,whereas others were not used in epics until a considerable time later in the post-classical period, though even then only isolated non-classical motifs were incorporated. This may be very true of polite literature, but similar tendencies probably did not exist in folk-literature at all. Otherwise it would be hard to explain how so many undisputedly ancient motifs, which were never adopted by polite literature, have come down to us. By saying all this, we do not mean to belittle the part played by the poet in respect of his invention, talent or poetic skill. We only wish to give emphasis to the importance of folk-literature for the preservation and propagation of folk-traditions created by anonymous groups of poets.

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NOTES

1. Cf. *Drevniye avtorï o Sredney Azii* (T. 1940); cf. also Christensen, *Les gestes*, 107–140.
2. Cf. Klinger, V.P., 'Skazochnïye motivï v istorii Gerodota', in *Izv. Kiev. univ., istor.-filol. fak.*, 1902, 111–202; cf. Lübker, *Reallexikon*, 459–460; Lur'ye, S. Ya., *Gerodot* (M.-L. 1947); Dovatur, A., *Povestvovatel'nïy i nauchnïy stil' Gerodota* (L. 1957); cf. also *Istoriya grecheskoy literaturï*, II, 28–68.
3. Cf. Lübker, *Reallexikon*, 567; Diodorus II, 32; *Ist.grecheskoy lit.*, II, 127–129.
4. *Est*, 2, 23; *Est*, 10, 2; Selin–Rost, *Einl. in das alte Testament*, 8th ed., 171–172; cf. also Cosquin, Emmanuel: *Le prologue-cadre des 1001 nuits – Les légendes perses et le Livre d'Ester* (Paris 1909).
5. Herodotus, IV, 1.–16.; also *Istoriya tadzh. naroda*, I (M. 1963), principally 189–211.
6. Herodotus, IV, 59.–82.
7. Herodotus, I, 96.–107, 108.–122.; with some restrictions also Herodotus, III, 67.–87.
8. Cf. *Ist. grech.lit.*, II, 101–126; Lübker, *Reallexikon*, 1129–1131.
9. Cf. *Ist. grech. lit.*, III, 153–156; Radtsig, *Ist. drevne-grech. lit.*, 495–497 *et passim*; the following chapters are based on old Iranian traditions: Diodorus, II, 24.–28., 32., 33., 43.–46.; IX., 32., 33.; cf. also Lübker, *Reallexikon*, 293.
10. Cf. Lübker, *Reallexikon*, 567; Diodorus, II, 1.–34., perhaps used directly.
11. Cf. Justinus, I, 1., 4.; II, 1., 3., 4.,; cf. Pompeius Trogus, *Fragmenta*, collegit Otto Seel (Bibl. Teubneriana)(Lipsiae 1956), *passim*: there are also important observations on textual criticism concerning Justinus, Pompeius Trogus, and other authors of antiquity; cf. also Teufel, *Gesch. der röm. Lit.*, 7th ed., II, 131–135.
12. Cf. Lübker, *Reallexikon*, 135.
13. Atheneus, XIII, 5., 75.; for German translation see *Griechische Märchen* (v. Bibl.!), 143–144.
14. Christensen, *Les gestes des rois*, 46, 51; Massé, *Firdousi et l'épopée nationale*, 23–24; Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 218–222; cf. also Zand, *Shest vekov slavï* (M. 1964), 17–18.
15. Cf. Lübker, *Reallexikon*, 135.
16. Cf. Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 91–97; for general information cf. also Nyberg, *Die Religionen des alten Iran* (Leipzig 1938), *passim*.
17. Cf. Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 97–101.
18. Cf. Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 101–120.
19. Cf. Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 120–144.
20. Cf. Just., I.1., II.1., III.3., and also Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 174–206; cf. also *Ist.tadzh.nar.*, I (M. 1963), 127–133; Masson–Romodin, *Istoriya Afganistana*, I (M. 1964), 41–45.
21. Cf. Christensen, *Les gestes*, 62; Osmanov, *Svodï*, *passim*; Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 174–206 *et passim*; also Molé, *L'épopée*, and Barthold, *ZDMG*, 1944, *ZVORAO*, 12 (1915); Inostrantsev, *Persidskaya literaturnaya traditsiya*; Darmesteter, James, *Etudes iraniennes*, II, 187–251; cf. also *Ist. tadzh. nar.*, I, 137–186.
22. Cf. Osmanov, *Svodï*, *passim*; Brockelmann, *Gesch. der arab. Lit.*, I, 123, 142, 284 *et passim*; see also Basset, *Mille et un contes arabes* (Paris 1924–1926), I–III, *passim*.
23. Cf. Christensen, *Les gestes*, 33.
24. Cf. Christensen, *Les gestes*, 50, 78–83; Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 189, 218–223.
25. Brockelmann, *GAL*, I, 147–148; Christensen, *Les gestes*, 56–60 *et passim*.
26. Christensen, *Les gestes*, 56–59; Fihrist, 305, 10; feudal transformation among others in the *Shāhnāma* and the *Siyāsat-nāma*; cf. also Firdausi, *Skazaniye o Bakhrome Chubine iz Shakhname* (St. 1953); cf. Czeglédy, K., '*Bahrām Čōbēn* and the Persian Apocalyptic Literature', *Acta Orientalia Acad. Sc. Hungaricae*, 8 (Budapest 1958), 21–43.

27. Christensen, *Les gestes*,60; Molé, *L'épopée iranienne après Firdousi, passim*; Inostrantsev, *Persid. liter. traditsiya, passim.*
28. Christensen, *Les gestes*, 58, 78–83; Fihrist, 305, 12.
29. Nöldeke, 'Das Iranische Nationalepos', 139, 189, 197; Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 240, 241, 267; Braginskiy, *Iz ist., passim; Ocherki*, 166–206; Baumgartner, *Gesch. der Weltlit.*, I, 535–539; Minorsky, *Vis u Rāmīn, passim*; Zand, *Shest vekov slavï*, 107–110; cf. also Braginskiy's preface to the Russian translation of Gurgānī, *Vis i Ramin* (M. 1963), 3–20.
30. Cf. Ranke, Friedrich, *Tristan und Isold* (München 1925).
31. Christensen, *Les gestes*, 62; for a very interesting Kurdish adaptation of Bezhin and Manije cf. Mackenzie, *Kurdish Dialect Studies*, II, 92–107.
32. Cf. Rypka, 'Les sept princesses de Nizāmī', in *L'âme de l'Iran*, 99–125; Bertel's, *Nizami* (M. 1956); Shaginyan, *Etyudï o Nizami* (M. 190).
33. Bertel's, *Roman ob Aleksandre, passim*; cf. also Pfister, *Alexander..., passim.*
34. Cf. Pigulevskaya, N.V., *Arabï u granits Vizantii i Irana v IV–VI vv.* (M.-L. 1964), principally 57–123.
35. B. Hishām, ed. Wüstenfeld, 235–236.
36. Brockelmann, *GAL*, *v.s.* 'Amelang', 95.
37. *Qur'ān*, XXXI, 5.–6.
38. Cf. Khanna al'- Fakhūrī, *Istoriya arabskoy literaturï*, I (M. 1959), 334–363.
39. Cf. among others Basset, René, *Mille et un contes, récits et légendes arabes*, I–III (Paris 1924–1926).
40. But cf. also Osmanov, *Svodï.*
41. Christensen, *Les gestes*, 33, 34, 43; Massé, *Firdousi*, 28, 29, 32–34.
42. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 176; *Al-āthāru'l-bāqiya*, 220.
43. Cf. Nöldeke, 'Das iranische Nationalepos', *GIPh*, II, 130–211; Massé, *Firdousi et l'épopée iranienne* (Paris 1935); Bertel's, *Ist. pers.-tadzh. liter.*, 169–238.
44. Baumgartner, *Gesch. der Weltlit.*, I, 533; cf. in any case also Bertel's, *IPTL*, 169–286.
45. Older forms of Iranian folk-traditions are to be found in the Caucasus, cf. Miller, Vs., *Ekskursï v oblast' russkago narodnago eposa I–VIII* (M. 1892), 55–85, 117–152, 152–172, *Prilozheniya*, 1–69.
46. Cf. Zhirmunskiy-Zarifov, *Uzb. ger. epos*, 184, 185.
47. The best evidence of this process is to be found in several examples of after-effects produced by Iranian folk-traditions about Rustam as found among non-Iranian peoples in the Caucasus, cf. *Kaukasische Märchen* (Jena 1920), 210–236.
48. Cf. Massé, *Firdousi*, 195, but also Zhirmunskiy-Zarifov, *op. cit.*; also Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*
49. Kowalski, *Studia nad Š.-n.*, II, 4–7; Firdousi, *Kniga tsarey Shakhname* (M. 1934), 48–56; Firdousi, *Shakhname v dvukh knigakh* (m. 1964), 75–81.
50. Osmanov, *O nar. tendentsiyakh*, 39–42; *Literatura Irana X–XV vv.*, principally 126–156; Firdousi, *Shakhname v dvukh knigakh* (M. 1946), kn. 2, 705–712.
51. Cf. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 166–206, *Iz ist.*, 309, 396, 399; Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 240, 246, 259, 310; Minorsky, *Vis u Rāmīn;* Molé (cf. Bibl. B VI b); cf. Gurgani, *Vis i Ramin* (M. 1963), principally Braginskiy's Preface, 3–20.
52. But Braginskiy (*Ocherki*, 166–206) holds a different view.
53. Cf. Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 233–234; Nöldeke, 'Iran. Nationalepos', 209–210; Massé, *Firdousi*, 263–268; Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 307–322; *Ocherki* 166–206.
54. Zhirmunskiy-Zarifov, *op. cit.*, 34; Zhukovskiy, *Musul'manstvo Rustama, passim.*
55. Cf. Pfister, *Alexander..., passim*; Bertel's, *Roman ob Aleksandre, passim*; Friedländer, J., *Die Chadhirlegende u.d. Alexanderroman* (Lpz. – B. 1913).
56. Cf. Lübker, *Reallexikon*, 534, 738.

57. Bertel's, *Roman ob Aleksandre*, 3, 4, 9–13.
58. Ayni, *Ustad Rudaki* (M. 1958); Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 123–148; Osmanov, *Firdousi* (M. 1959); Massé, *Firdousi*, 53–97; Klimovich, *Khrestomatiya, passim*; cf. also Braginskiy, 'Okean "Shakh-name" i nekotorïye ego taynï', in Firdousi, *Shakh-name v dvukh knigakh* (M. 1964), I, 5–9.
59. E.g. *inter alia*: Morgenstierne, Georg, *Indo-Iranian Frontier-Languages*, II, 510–512 (Wakhan); Morgenstierne, *IIFL*, I, 165–171 (Parachi); Masson-Romodin, *Istoriya Afganistana*, I (M. 1964), 242–255; cf. also Mackenzie, *Kurdish Dialect Studies*, II (London 1962), 32–43.
60. Massé, *Croyances et coutumes*, 369–407 *et passim*; Hackin-Kohzad, *Légendes et coutumes afghanes, passim*.
61. Massé, *Firdousi*, 43, 95; Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah, *Afghanistan of the Afghans*, 97, 114, 121–124, 136–148, 152–157; Hackin-Kohzad, *op. cit., passim*.
62. Duda, *Ferhād und Schīrīn*, 3; cf. also Aliyev, *Legenda o Khosrove i Shirin v liter. nar. Vostoka* (M. 1960).
63. Christensen, *Les gestes*, 66.
64. Cf. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit.*
65. Cf. Bertel's, *Nizami*, 129–153; Krachkovskiy, *Rannyaya istoriya povesti o Madzhnune i Leyle...*, 31.
66. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit.*, 294–301; *Tadzhikskiye nar. skazki*, 196–203.
67. An episode from *Seven planets* by Navā'ī.
68. Cf. Qur'ān, s. XII; among many other versions cf. also Mackenzie, *Kurdish Dialect Studies*, II, 180–201.
69. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 177–180; cf. *Der gehörnte Siegfried und andere Volksbücher* (B. 1956), 35–57; Huet, 'Sur l'origine de la Floire et Blancheflor', *Romania*, 27 (1899); Gröber, *Franz. Lit.* (Roman. Grdr.), 490, 527; ten Brink, Bernhard, *Geschichte der englischen Literatur*, 2.A (Strassburg 1899), 200, 273 (Middle-English romance of chivalry); Voretzsch, Carl, *Einführung in das Studium der altfranz. Literatur*, 2.A. (Halle 1913), 381 *et passim*
70. Petit de Julleville, *Histoire de la langue et de la littérature francaise*, I, 255–344; Vogt, *Mittelhochdeutsche Literatur* (Grdr. d. germ. Phil.), 2nd ed., II, 185–308.
71. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit.*, 337, 449–450.
72. Cf. Baumgartner, *op. cit.*, I, 568–569; Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 318; Zand, *Shest vekov slavï*, 162–164; cf. also *Plutovka iz Bagdada* (M. 1963), 14 (Borshchevskiy's excellent essay 'Persidskaya narodnaya literatura', 5–26).
73. Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 318; Baumgartner, *op. cit.*, I, 568; cf. also Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 298–301; Zand, *op, cit.*, 164.
74. Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 318–320; Baumgartner, *op. cit.*, I, 569.
75. Cf. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 285–286.
76. Cf. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 286–289; Zand, *op. cit.*, 164.
77. Cf. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 338–360.
78. Cf. Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 320–321; *Thousand and One Nights*, 756th–778th night; *Mille et un jours*, 99th–108th day; Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit.*, 281, 451.
79. Cf. Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 317–323.
80. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit.*, 340.
81. *Istoriya tadzh. naroda*, II, kniga I–ya, 364–406; kn. 2–ya, 21–47, 57–66, 103–114 (M. 1964); cf. also Christina Hole, *English Folk Heroes*, 71–102 (Robin Hood!).
82. Several dialectal variants of the name exist.
83. Cf. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 88–119; 'O tadzh. epose "Gurguli" i ego khudozhestvennïkh osobennostyakh', in *Voprosï izucheniya eposa nar. SSSR*, 126–148; Klimovich, *Khrestomatiya*, 117–119, *Iz ist. literatur Sov. Vostoka*, 181–199; Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit.*, 164–279; Zhirmunskiy, 'Epich. tvorchestvo nar. Sred. Azii', in *Nar. ger.epos*, 195–240, mainly 203–204, 213–218.
84. Lenskiy, *Tadzhikskaya SSR, Muzïkal'naya kul'tura*, 2nd ed. (M. 1957) 25–26; Mironov, *Mu-*

zïka Tadzhikov (St. 1932); cf. also Zhirmunskiy, 'Sredneaziatskiye nar. skaziteli', in *Nar. ger. epos*, 241–281.

85. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, 34, 201, 282; Klimovich, *Khrestomatiya*, 23; Tolstov, *Po sledam drevnego Khorezma, passim*, v. indices!

86. Klimovich, *op. cit.*, 23.

87. *Sov. kompozitorï* (M. 1957), 126–128.

88. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit.*, 165, 166, 177.

89. Cf. *Ukrayins'ka narodna poetïchna tvorchist*, I (Kïyiv 1958), 485; many texts in the anthology *Istorïchni pisni* (Kïyiv 1961), 306–330, annotations to texts 957–961.

90. Chodzko, *Specimens of Popular Poetry*, 7, 8.

91. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit.*, 192–194.

92. Herodotus, I, 110.

93. Livius, I, 4.

94. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit.*, 173, 174, 183, 184, 186–190, 191, 197, 199, 212.

95. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit.*, 201; Zhukovskiy, *Musul'manstvo Rustama*, 109; Klimovich, *Khrestomatiya*, 23; cf. Kowalski, *Studia*, II, 4–7, 79–89; Firdousi, *Kniga tsarey, Shakhname* (M. 1934), 48–57; Lakhuti, *Kuznets Kova* (St. - L. 1941).

96. Massé, *Croyances*, 371–382, 390, 397, 409, 410, 413, 414; Hackin–Kohzad, *Légendes et coutumes afghanes, passim.*

97. Cf. *Antologiya tadzh. poezii*, 579; *Nar. poeziya Tadzhikistana*, 51–54; cf. also Diodorus, II, 34; III, 36; cf. Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 133.

98. *Tadzh. nar. skazki*, 178–182.

99. *Sorok devushek* (Klimovich, 'Predislovie'), 5, 12; Klimovich, *Iz ist. liter. nar. Sov. Vostoka*, 200–220; Zhdanko, *Karakalpak. poema Kïrk Kïz, passim*; cf. also *Istoriya tadzh. naroda* (M. 1963), I, principally 189–210.

100. Tolstov, *Po sledam drevnego Khorezma, passim.*

101. Cf. *Istoriya tadzh. nar.*, II, kn.I-ya, 115-119; Yakubovskiy, A. Yu., 'Vosstaniye Mukannï – dvizheniye lyudey v belïkh odezhdakh', *SV*, 5 (1948), 35–54

102. Bertel's, *Navoi, passim*; Klimovich, *Khrestomatiya*, 20, 776; Boldïrev, A. N., 'Alisher Navoi v rasskazakh sovremennikov', in *Alisher Navoi* (M.-L. 1946), 121–152.

103. Klimovich, *Khrestomatiya*, 20, 43, 776.

104. Cf. 'Aufï, *Lubābu'l-albāb, passim* (Bibl. B VIb); see also Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 304–312.

105. Cf. Dames, *Sketch of the North Balochi Language*, 133–165.

106. Cf. Beidar, *Grammaire Kurde*; Makas, *Kurdische Texte, passim*; Mann, *Mukrï, Kurdskiye skazki, passim*; Mackenzie, *Kurdish Dialect Studies*, II (London 1962), *passim.*

107. Concise but excellent references to Ossetian folk-epics and folk-poetry are contained in: *Istoriya Osetinskoy ASSR*, I (M. 1959); for the most important passages see 36–37, 53–54, 68, 74–75, 78, 92–94, 96, 103,107, 108, 113–116, 118, 128, 152–154, 172; an extremely important essay on the oldest heroic traditions of the Caucasian peoples was incorporated by E. M. Meletinskiy in his excellent book *Proiskhozhdeniye geroicheskogo eposa* (M. 1963), 156–246, mainly 156–206.

108. Cf. *Muzïkal'naya kul'tura avtonom. respublik RSFSR, Tskhurbayeva, Severo-oset. ASSR*, 245-262.

109. *Oset. nartskiy epos*, 7, 11, 95–116.

110. Dirr, *Kaukasische Märchen*, 247–248; cf. also Meletinskiy, *Proiskhozhdeniye ger. eposa*, 206-230.

111. *Nartskiye skazaniya* (Bitiyev, 'Predisloviye'); *Osetinskiye nartskiye skazaniya* (Kulov, 'Predislovie').

112. Semper, *Rassen und Religionen im alten Vorderasien*, 351; Meletinskiy, *Proiskhozhdeniye ger. eposa*, 156–246; Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*, I–II (Berlin 1872–1875), *passim*; v. Orelli, *Allg. Religionsgeschichte*, II, 187–259.

113. Romaskevich, *Persidskiye nar. skazki*, 32.
114. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit.*, 379–402.
115. Kurdoyev–Tsukerman, *Kurdskiye tekstï*, 30–46.
116. Cf. *Kurdskiye skazki, passim*; Nikitine, *Les Kurdes*, 250–281; Vil'chevskiy, *Mukrinskiye Kurdï*, 218–222; Aristova, *Ocherki kul'turï i bïta kurd. krestyan Irana*, 256–258.
117. Mann, *Mukrï*, 12–24; cf. Vil'chevskiy, *Mukrinskiye kurdï*, 219.
118. Mann, *Mukrï*, 24–81; Makas, *Kurdische Texte*, 1–20; Vil'chevskiy, *Mukrinskiye kurdï*, 219.
119. Vil'chevskiy, *op. cit.*, 219; *Kurdskiye skazki*, 55–59.
120. *Afganskiye skazki*, 93–112.
121. *Afganskiye skazki*, 11–20; also Darmesteter, *Chants pop. des Afgh.*, 117–124.
122. *Afganskiye skazki*, 73–82.
123. Darmesteter, *Chants pop.*, 1–84.
124. Darmesteter, *Chants pop.*, 110–146.
125. Dames, *Sketch*, 133–171.
126. Dames, *Sketch*, 133–135.
127. Dames, *Sketch*, 137–140.
128. Dames, *Sketch*, 142–147.

III. INTRODUCTION TO FOLK-TALES

A. IRANIAN FOLK-TALES AND PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THEM

Iran is a country exceedingly rich in folk-tales. Some motifs from these tales are to be found only on their home ground, but most of them have spread to far-away places often beyond the domain of Iranian culture. Ingeniously devised and developed single fairy-tales or whole series of them grouped together according to the most diverse principles, form an essential part of Persian polite literature.[1] Until now, however, the study of folk-tales in Iran has been somewhat neglected.

It would be a mistake to regard and treat tales merely as a form of fiction. When studying them one has to find out about the way they were composed as well as about the social milieu in which they came into being.

The telling of folk-tales used to be, and is still in many cases, subject to a number of taboos. In the first place one was restricted to certain times of the day and often of the year. It was believed that if such rules were broken it might bring about the death of domestic animals or cause a pestilence. The use of musical instruments, with which it was the custom in many places to accompany the narrator, is also frequently limited. Winter nights were generally considered the most suitable time for telling folk-tales.[2]

In this context Zarubin[3] made an interesting observation among the Baluchis which confirms this: it is improper to tell folk-tales in the daytime. The practice has therefore been renounced and it is simply not done, even if people have the opportunity or the leisure. It is often said that the breaking of this rule will have serious repercussions on the house where a folk-tale was told at an unsuitable time, or that an accident may happen. Others are afraid lest there be unpleasant consequences for the narrator himself, particularly that he may be afflicted with irresoluteness, an effect of which might be the inability to take the necessary decisive action even in emer-

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gencies. If in spite of all this the Baluchi do tell a folk-tale, they are careful to avoid ritual and other appurtenances connected with folk-tales.

The Tatis, a small Iranian tribe in the Caucasus, have a proverb about this which is quite amusing: If you tell a folk-tale in the daytime, a thief will steal your trousers!

Customs like these, so obviously bound up with taboos, can only be explained by conjecture: at night the cattle is safely asleep locked up in the stable and can be protected from evil spirits in many different ways, for instance with herbs. Also in winter the spirits of the forest and other demons are supposed to be asleep in the north, or at any rate so far away from man that they cannot possibly come near him, listen to him or harm him. Another tradition says that winter is just the only time when good spirits can listen to folk-tales, because in summer they are too busy attending to work and activities that are so beneficial to man.

Many nations have traditions to the effect that demons are fond of folk-tales. Very old examples are the Greek Sirens, the Old-German Lorelei, and various water sprites. The most varying kinds of spirits, too, are fond of listening to music.[4]

Folk-tales can also form a reliable and important source of information in an attempt to reconstruct the prehistoric form of a certain mythological subject; for Greek, Roman and to an equal extent Ancient-Iranian and Ancient-Indian myths in the form in which we have inherited them in religious texts, epics and edifying entertainment literature, are no more than relatively late and recent stylisations and adaptations of old traditions, myths, and folk-tales.

Of course folk-tales are not just simple poetical forms, on the contrary they are highly heterogeneous. This is not surprising if one considers for how long they have been evolving and how many different uses and functions they have served. In this respect social milieu and the purpose of this genre of folk-tradition were decisive.

Some tales were principally intended for the entertainment of the aristocracy or other ruling classes and consequently abound in princes and princesses. On the other hand we also know of folk-tales representing a very pronounced social and even democratic point of view; in these cases we find the principal characters are mostly peasants, craftsmen and other working people. One should not forget that when the folk-tales came to be cyclised in stories-within-a-framework, or in series, stories of dissimilar types – either completely contrasting or belonging to the intermediate type – could appear side by side.

Two main types that are diametrically opposed are the romantic and fairy-tales and the realistic tales of everyday life. In the first category fantasy and adventure play a very important part. They are often derived from legends, and certain motifs from this type of folk-tale have found their way into heroic epics, especially in more recent times. Characteristic of the more realistic folk-tales is the fact that fantasy is only seldom resorted to; they lack the demonic element and do not make use of canonised formulas for the plot or of stereotyped expressions. It must be strongly emphasised,

however, that there are very few folk-tales belonging purely to one type – most of them are combinations of several categories.[5]

The gamut of folk-tale motifs is therefore extremely rich and varied. On the one hand there are the tales of magic with countless *dēvs, parīs,* giants and giantesses, sorcerers and sorceresses, miracles and people being transformed into animals or *vice versa;* on the other hand we find an enormous number of transitional forms, up to tales of everyday life that approach our idea of a short story – realistic in character with many details carefully observed from daily occurrences. These last are full of rogues and thieves, boasting and buffoonery (Seven in one Blow), wagers and tasks which, on condition they are brought to a satisfactory or successful end, are rewarded by a fortune or a wife. Stories about deceived husbands should also not be underestimated, for they are very much in vogue, though all too often these border on vulgarity and become almost pornographic. On the other hand, there is a very ancient group of animal folk-tales, mostly totemistic and at least partly aetiological (some properties of animals are explained). The distribution of these animal folk-tales is determined by zoological and geographical factors. And the division of animals into the deceitful and the deceived is understandable if one considers the popular psychology at the time when they came into being.[6]

The realistic folk-tales of everyday life are probably more recent than the animal and magic stories.

When studying Iranian folk-tales one must start with the Avesta.[7] In this respect the fact that the Sasanian part of the Avesta has been lost is not so distressing, for there were hardly any folk-tale subjects that we do not know of in the missing books. Valuable, however, are some episodes or even mere allusions which are to be found in the hymn-like Yashts. For the interpretation of these, a comparison with later texts is also necessary, otherwise much in them would be misunderstood. They are mostly Middle-Iranian works of a predominantly theological character; unfortunately, however, a large part of the original pattern has been destroyed by later additions. Very important therefore are the recordings of the ancient Greek authors, as they reflect earlier stages of development. However precious the old West-Iranian traditions may be, and particularly the epic and heroic ones that have been thus preserved, they remain somewhat isolated because we have no examples of subsequent developments. This will always give rise to considerable difficulties.

In the majority of cases collections of Iranian folk-tales were intended merely as entertainment and thus do not express any special trends. Many of these recordings of folk-tales are closely related to prose folk-books, and consequently served as model for folk-prints later on.[8]

Iran is a country in which the native culture very early became intermingled with Semitic influences. A very striking instance is the genesis of the *Thousand and One Nights,* as we shall see later, like other similar recorded collections of tales and stories rich in Iranian motifs. It makes no difference here whether these are literary or

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popular adaptations. Indo-European features appear more often in tales that have been used in polite literature – mostly the products of popular narrators or harem women. Sometimes we find quite startling analogies to folk-tales of other Indo-European nations. Another important factor is that although Iranian folk-tales and fables were very frequently used as examples or parables in mystic literature, they were islamised only in form and very superficially at that, and in most cases remained completely untouched by later religious development. On the contrary, the philosophy of life as revealed in the folk-tales shows fundamental relics of original pre-Islamic religious ideas, especially in respect of the supernatural. The chief exponents of the supernatural in Iranian folk-tales are *dēvs* and *parīs*, sometimes also jinns and ghouls, which are of Arabic origin.

It is often very difficult to distinguish between adaptation for polite literature and popular tradition in folk-tales, since the latter are in fact frequently reflections of an earlier literary work of which the folk-literature model has long since been forgotten. It is worth noting that Semitic folk-tales most often came in for literary treatment in Iran, whereas the Indo-European type are only seldom to be found in polite literature and have consequently retained their original form fairly well.

We need not be surprised to find that Shī'ite philosophy is full of old Iranian ideas, for instance that the Twelfth Imām lives in hiding somewhere and will not appear until the day of the Last Judgment.[9]

The narrator is an exceedingly important person. He is usually known as *qiṣṣa-gū*, and his stories are mostly about animals and magic. His sphere of action is the *ma'rika*, i.e. a gathering of people in a public place. This custom was already mentioned at the beginning of the 16th century A.D. by Kāshifī.[10]

The profession of narrator of folk-tales is now dying out, but forty or fifty years ago it was by no means an exceptional occupation. Like the jugglers who used to come to annual fairs, the narrators generally brought along some pictures to which they could refer during the course of the story. As folk-tales were usually recited at a fairly high speed, this often caused considerable difficulties for the European scholar trying to write them down.[11]

Folk-tales, which are nearly always in prose, allow the narrator a large measure of initiative and the possibility of improvisation regarding the arrangement of details and performance. It is he who chooses it and adapts it to his own taste or to the company in question, and to his own relationship with other social classes.

Professional story-tellers were nearly always luckless beggars, often artisans who had come down in the world or small stall-holders at the market; some of them would do occasional jobs as carpenters or joiners, while others sold fruit in the town bazaar or knitted stockings. The social status of story-tellers in Iran was not bad, for the good ones among them enjoyed a fair measure of public esteem and even respect. A few managed to rise to the position of court narrator (*naqqāl-bāshī*), and became members of the Shāh's household. The better story-tellers were usually able to read

and write and were relatively well-read, particularly in the field of folk-tales. This is why besides popular and orally transmitted folk-tales and stories, they would sometimes re–tell or quote from many a work of polite literature. Among samples of such works that were particularly popular with the public were several episodes from the *Shāh-nāma* – such as the adventures and heroic deeds of Rustam, Bīzhan and Manīzha[12] etc. – or parts of old Persian romances of chivalry.[13] Although many story-tellers had quite astounding memories, they recorded their repertory of tales in books (*Kitābcha*, also sometimes called *Tūmār*). In place of these manuscript memory-aids, recently cheap lithographs have been appearing – Iranian prose folk-prints.

The Iranians are passionately fond of listening to folk-tales while they are at work, but even more so after working-hours. That is how not only the *ma'rika* but also the Iranian coffee-houses and tea-shops (*qahva-khāna*) have become domains of activity for story-tellers. Particularly in summer they try to find a place shaded from the sun. The regular presence of a good story-teller helps to make a coffee-house popular. The coffee-brewers know this very well and often hire a narrator or story-teller or reader (who usually reads passages from the *Shāh-nāma*) to encourage business. Everything is carefully agreed upon: mutual obligations, wages, advances, the duration and hours of narrating or reading. They generally start after two o'clock or after sunset and go on until eleven.

The story-teller dramatises his recital and illustrates it with play of features and gesticulation. The audience also plays an active part, by responding in unison at appropriate points in the story. After all, they are not hearing it for the first time! When the climax of excitement is reached, however, the narration is suddenly interrupted, the interval providing an opportunity to collect the story-teller's fee. The main season for story-telling is the winter or the Ramaḍan, as soon as fasting is broken at sunset. Other festive occasions such as the Iranian New Year, weddings and births, also provide the story-teller with plenty of eager listeners. On all such occasions narrators are just as indispensable as musicians, but the former enjoy incomparably more respect and honour.

If a conversation on daily occurrences comes to a halt the moment has come to call upon the narrator. The same happens among the women; it is usually the eldest of them who remembers the folk-tales handed down for generations, captures thereby the imagination of the children and entertains the grown-ups with her stories. Not seldom, however, the women sit with the men and at such gatherings other types of folk-literature are also recited now and then.

Wandering and travelling story-tellers are also of great importance. It is they who spread local tales far and wide. Most of them are cattle-drovers (*chārvādārs*) and dervishes, both these categories of men being famous as professional narrators.

A further group of story-tellers, though a very small one, which deserves just as much attention, are the Persian Jews, among whom a great many stories have been preserved that have already completely disappeared from Moslem traditions.[14] This is also true of the even smaller minority formed by the Parsees.

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It need not surprise us that until not so very long ago schools for story-tellers used to be set up. Often a group consisting of a strictly limited number of young men would gather round an old and experienced narrator of high repute, to learn the technique and practice of story-telling by repeated listening and watching. But all this is certainly a thing of the past now, apart from a very few exceptional cases.[15]

Owing to lack of space we can here mention only a few of the very many subjects and old traditions that have survived in such astonishing numbers in Iranian folk-tales. There are to all appearances extremely ancient folk-traditions about the sun and the moon, about eclipses of the sun, numerous legends about the origin of different animal species (monkeys, bears, elephants, toads, several birds – among them being the hoopoe –, boars, dogs, mules and camels), their evolution and characteristics, and also the reasons for mutual enmities (cats and dogs, dogs and jackals, crabs and asses, etc.). Often the issue of a story is an attempt to explain the longevity of certain animals. The belief that animals have their own language has given rise to several legends about men who were thought to understand this animal language (Solomon – Sulaymān, Muḥammad, etc.). A distinction is made between good and wicked animals and folk-tales attempt to explain this. At the same time there are numerous legends about plants and their power of speech and characteristics; among these we find some myths which are very old indeed, dealing with the sacredness of certain plants. Water, too, has been the subject of many folk-tales, traditions and superstitions since the very earliest times; there are stories of holy wells, lakes, and sacred springs. Supernatural beings (*dēvs, parīs, shayṭāns,* jinns, etc.) and the places inhabited or favoured by them have all given rise to romantic tales. The most diverse and fantastic traditions have also been woven around popular etymological explanations of place-names together with historical memories. There are a great many folk-tales to be found about the founding or destruction of cities, castles, bridges, canals and wells, towers, dams and dikes, and also caravanserais. Connected with castles there are highly fantastic tales about maidens, demons, secret treasures and heroic deeds, incredible adventures, etc. Ancient monuments, like Bīsutūn for instance, whose true history was either not known at all or only imperfectly, and places of pilgrimage, *Imām-zādas* and famous buildings all provided folk-tradition with a vast scope for the development of fantasies. One can thus easily understand that even such inhospitable places as the Iranian mountains, hills, crags and caves have their own folk-tales and that caves and mountain hide-outs are predominant features in them. To round off this by no means comprehensive list, it may be added that all the single tales used to be told either independently or in groups, which would seem to be the beginning of epic cyclisation.[16]

Folk-tales very often reveal the social and ideological point of view of the narrator. We find a king or other influential person being contrasted with a poor fellow of the common people. More often than not the kings tend to be rather stupid and to depend on their viziers in everything, while their greatest worries are connected with adding

more beautiful women to their harems. The poor man, on the other hand, is usually concerned about justice or happiness, and that is why, after overcoming a number of difficulties, he manages to attain his desire.

Differences between settled and nomadic ways of life also find expression in the folk-tales. One of the most obvious instances is the unequal status of women. Nomadic women, as is well-known, have an incomparably better position than wives in settled communities. Just for curiosity's sake it is worth mentioning that in Southern Azerbayjan (i.e. in the immediate proximity and clearly under the influence of Iranian culture) the theme of a wife choosing her husband by casting apples has been recorded – a motif that occurs also in West-Slavonic fairy-tales. A folk-tale on this subject has also been recorded in Tajikistan.[17]

Although by and large what has been said about the Persian folk-tales also applies to the Tajik ones, there are nonetheless a few differences and peculiarities. The heroes of Tajik folk-tales share many characteristics with those in the *Shāh-nāma*. And it should be added that in the East many a tradition has remained more alive than in the western part of the Iranian language area. It is important to remember in this connection that in the East popular motifs were never covered by Shī'ite influences, as happened in the West. In Tajik animal stories we are particularly struck by the energy of the animal heroes. The brave she-goat, for instance, punishes the wicked wolf herself and rescues her kids without outside assistance, instead of giving way to useless lamentations and waiting for help to appear. Common people always get far more sympathy among the Tajiks than gentlefolk. This is also the reason why in most Tajik folk-tales the principal character is a man or woman of the common people. Heroes have to satisfy strict moral demands: respect for their parents, a good reputation and unblemished honour, respect for labour, contempt for idlers and vagabonds, intrepidity in face of the menaces of nature, kindness and love for animals that serve man.[18]

Not infrequently we find the well-known epic motifs in Iranian folk-tales too. Farhād, in particular, makes his appearance in the West as well as in the East, and Majnūn also turns up quite often. It sometimes happens that the hero appears under another name, but the type is recognisable and unambiguous. There is, however, an even stranger phenomenon – new episodic tales continue to be attributed to a well-known name which has already become an institution in itself. The name serves merely to underline the connection with other deeds of the hero; this is the case in the countless stories of Rustam.[19] A special group in this respect is formed by several folk-tales and stories with historical persons as protagonists. The Talishes, for example possess tales about Shāh 'Abbās[20] (who has certainly been moulded to fit the scheme and strongly idealised as compared with his true historic personality), and in the East, among the Afghans, the Tajiks and the Iranians of the Pamir, the Ghaznavid Sulṭān Maḥmūd appears as principal hero. Among the Sunnites we find stories about caliphs, and the Shī'ites possess a great many tales about 'Alī and his family. It is usually quite

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obvious that only in exceptional cases do the folk-tale heroes have anything more in common with their historical models than their name. Here we have very clear and convincing proof of how history has become legend and how the epic texture could develop. There can be no doubt that the integration of folk-tale episodes and their epic cyclisation on the one hand, and the breaking-up and dissolution of epic traditions on the other, caused many very widespread motifs from one category of folk-literature to be taken over by another.[21]

Even the folk-tales of other Iranian nations and peoples are worth systematical consideration. The relations between Persian, Afghan, Baluchi, Kurdish and Pamirian folk-tales are extremely complicated. In the non-Persian areas linguistically allied to Iran, these mutual influences penetrated indirectly by means of polite literature, records committed to writing, or folk-books.

The Kurdish folk-tales strikingly reflect the view of life of a heroic and hospitable but bitterly oppressed and afflicted people. A Kurd never attacks an unarmed man.[22] The obligation to hospitality is stronger than the blood-feud.[23] Among the Kurds women occupy an eminent position. They are not acquainted with *chadra* and possess rights equal to those of men. Frequently a woman has stood at the head of an army and has even ruled over a Kurd principality. From the moral point of view the picture of the Kurdish woman is most unusual, and this is borne out in many a work of Kurdish folk-literature (e.g. *Mamu and Zinē, Mame and Ayshe*).[24] Personal liberty comes first and foremost with the Kurds, and it stands to reason that this conception is also to be found in the folk-tales. The concretisation of this idea is the folk-tale relating to the Country of Freedom.[25] A pronounced feeling for justice is evident in the Kurdish folk-tale, in which foolishness, villainy, cowardice, infamy and above all avarice are despised. A much-loved hero is the Kurdish Naṣraddīn, named Bahlūli-zāna.[26] Numerous animal tales are also in vogue, and we find the bald-headed Kachal appearing very often.[27]

The folk-tales of Iranians who had settled in the Pamirs[28] exhibit many ancient features. The slight extent to which they have been islamised is another striking feature, and consequently important for ethnographical research. No less important is the fact that both Pamir and even Yaghnobi folk-tales[29] are rich in primitive elements, sometimes of a barbarous and almost savage character. But a detailed analysis of this phenomenon would require special study.

Ossetian folk-tales stand somewhat apart, as do the Ossetian Nart epics. Nevertheless they deserve more attention than they have hitherto been given, inasmuch as they have retained ancient motifs in a configuration that is but slightly deformed and also because until the last century the Ossetians had no polite literature, as a result of which their folk-tradition was able to develop practically undisturbed. Ossetian folk-tales bear great similarity to the Nart epics and deal mainly with supernatural beings. They quite clearly reflect the precarious situation of the common people. Thus it is quite reasonable to compare the Ossetian folk-tales with the Nart epics. Their epical motifs have often evolved in the form of prose, although in an independent manner.

Typical supernatural figures in the Ossetian folk-tales are giants and dragons, while the underground kingdom is also often mentioned. Social strife and the ideological standpoint of the narrator are invariably clearly demonstrated.[30]

As a rule the Ossetian folk-tales are more recent than the latest Nart epic cycles, which explains why the folk-tales reflect even more strongly the hard conditions of the women and of the common people than do the Nart epics.[31]

Up to the present only a start has been made in the study of Iranian folk-tales, and particularly their true folklore motifs and forms. But it is already quite clear that once we possess reliable information on all the folk-tales that have survived the years, many puzzling aspects of polite literature will be much easier to explain, if only because there is no better way of finding out about the mentality of a nation and its folk-literature than by studying its folk-tales.

B. IRANIAN FOLK-HUMOUR

There are few peoples that are fonder of short humorous stories than the Iranians. We are here confronted with two almost diametrically opposite forms. On the one hand we come across highly fantastic folk-tales, on the other scenes taken from every-day-life, often with satirical points. Political and social conditions accelerated the development of folk-satire in Iran, as it was the only weapon that could be used against the oppression of the ruling classes. It was very dangerous, however, to voice one's feelings or displeasure openly, so from the earliest times onwards fables were used. The animals that appear most often in the fables were a fairly safe protection against the anger and fatal criticism from more powerful classes. Zākānī too, was very well aware of this.[32]

Of course it was impossible to dispense with human characters for ever. Fairly early on therefore, a type of story evolved reminiscent of *Till Eulenspiegel,* in most cases highly spiced, even to an indelicate degree. This kind of poetry belongs mostly to the world of men, for women preferred the real folk-tales.

By and large it is immaterial whether the hero of these stories is called Naṣraddīn Khvāja or Mullā Mushfiqī, Apandī, Shaykh Bahlūl-i Dānā, Kamīna, Aldar Kosa, or whatever else it may be. Whether they are about Turks, Persians and Azerbayjanians or Tajiks and Uzbeks, Lures or Turkmenians, Kazakhs and Kirgizes, in essence these tales are all more or less alike. We always find some priest of a lower rank, or often a preacher, even a judge, who all too often succeeds in fooling his neighbours and not infrequently his masters, which he does in none too choice a manner. Usually he is excused, even in circumstances that would otherwise provoke serious revenge. Of course the sneers and mockery of this odd figure very often conceal

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bitter criticism and accusations levelled against existing conditions and abuses; sometimes, however, they are merely an effort to produce humour at any cost.

Yet another figure in Islamic folk-literature who, particularly in earlier days, may have influenced the development of the modern Naṣraddīn to a considerable extent, is Juḥ'ā, or Sī Juḥ'ā[33], very well known among the Arabs and Berbers of Northern Africa. His adventures and mischievous tricks are a West-Islamic parallel to the much better known pranks of Naṣraddīn. Juḥ'ā (generally, and especially in Persian literature, he is known as Jūḥī) also turns up in Southern Europe.

The jolly joker Giufà[34], or Giucca, is well known and loved in Sicily, Calabria, and even in Tuscany. According to Basset, the Arabs, as early as the 4th century A.H., possessed collections of stories which were not unlike the tales about Till Eulenspiegel, the stupid townspeople and the Seven Swabians, which later became widespread in Europe. Stories of a similar nature also existed in India many hundreds of years earlier.

Jūḥī is mentioned in earlier Persian literature several times, for instance by Anvarī (d. 565/1169–70) in his *dīvān,* and particularly by Rūmī (d. 672/1273), who includes three anecdotes about Jūḥī in his *mathnavī,* and finally by Jāmī in the *Bahāristān.*[35]

Neither must we omit to mention another well-known personage when dealing with Iranian folk-humour. This is the bald-headed Kachal, whom we find among the Kurds, the Persians and the Tajiks, while he is no less popular with the Yaghnobis.[36] He is the same figure who comes into puppet folk-drama.

An immensely widespread form of folk-humour are short anecdotes, called *laṭīfahā* or *ḥikāyāt,* not seldom satirically pointed. We find them among the Persians, the Tajiks, and even with the Afghans. In Afghanistan they are definitely recognised as a special genre of folk-literature.[37]

As to the anecdotes and jokes, there are genetic connections between folk-tradition and polite literature and their written records. These latter are very complex and often ambiguous.

NOTES

1. Cf. Ethé, *Np. Lit.,* 320–334.
2. Zelenin, *Religiozno-magicheskaya funktsiya fol'klornïkh skazok,* 215–217.
3. Zarubin, 'K izucheniyu beludzhskogo yazïka i fol'klora', *ZKV,* v, 663.
4. Zelenin, *op. cit.,* 218–223.
5. *Skazki i legendï tatar Krïma,* 18, 19, 24.
6. Huet, *Les contes populaires,* 6, 7, 11.
7. Darmesteter, *Etudes iraniennes,* II, 187–251; Braginskiy, *Iz ist.,* 80–206.
8. Christensen, *Märchen aus Iran,* 5–13; Romaskevich, *Persidskie skazki* (Predisloviye).

9. Christensen, *Märchen aus Iran*, 20–27.
10. Galunov, *Ma'rike gīrī*, 94, 95.
11. Christensen, *Märchen*, 17.
12. Kowalski, *Studia*, II, 25–28, 31–35, 57–60; Schack, *Heldensagen*, 156–187, 295–324.
13. Cf. Ethé, *Np.Lit.*, 318–320; Baumgartner, *op. cit.*, I, 568; Zand, *op. cit.*, 19–23, 94, 162–164.
14. Cf. Shohini Sherozī, 'Dostoni Ardasher va Ester', *ShS*, 1958,3, 86–106; 4, 105–128; for other subjects see also: Abrahamian, *Dialectes*.
15. Romaskevich, *Persid. nar. skazki*, 14–31; also Nikitine, *Les Kurdes*, 273–274.
16. Massé, *Croyances*, 171, 172, 186–190, 199, 200, 209, 213, 214, 219, 225, 226, 230, 235, 354–356, 359, 360, 365, 367, 371, 373, 374, 377, 378, 379–382, 385, 387, 399, 401, 410, 413, 414, 416, 439–489; Hackin–Kohzad, *Légendes et coutumes afghanes*.
17. *Azerbeydzhanskiye tyurkskiye skazki*, XVIII–XIX; *Tadzhik. nar. skazki*, 168–177; also Christensen, *Märchen*, 77–85.
18. Cf. *Tadzhik. nar. skazki, passim*.
19. Cf. Dirr, *Kaukasische Märchen*, 210–236.
20. *Azerb. tyurk. skazki*, VII; also cf. Romaskevich, *Persid. nar. skazki*, 67–70.
21. Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah, *op. cit., passim*; Morgenstierne, *IIFL*, I/II; Klimovich, *Khrestomatiya*, 794, 800.
22. *Kurdskiye skazki*, 84–94.
23. *Kurdskiye skazki*, 172–173.
24. Cf. Makas, *Kurdische Texte*, 1–20; Mann, *Mukri*, 28–81; Kurdoyev–Tsukerman, *op, cit.*, 30–46.
25. *Kurdskiye skazki*, 163–166, etc.
26. *Kurdskiye skazki*, 174–177, 123–126.
27. *Kurdskiye skazki*, 100–102.
28. Skjöld, *Materialien, passim; Oroshorskiye tekstī, passim*; Solokova, *Ocherki po fonetike iran. yazīkov*, I, II, cf. also Lentz, *Auf dem Dach der Welt* and *Pamirdialekte*.
29. Andreyev–Peshchereva, *Yagnobskiye tekstī*; Lentz, *Auf dem Dach der Welt*.
30. Britayev, *Oset. sk.; Oset. nar. skazki* (1951, Britayev, Kaloyev); cf. also Munkácsi, *Blüten der osset. Volksdichtung*.
31. Cf. *Osetinskaya literatura*, 7; Britayev, *Oset. skazki, Vvedeniye*.
32. Cf. Radzhabov, *Mirovozzreniye Ubayda Zokoni* (St. 1958).
33. Cf. *Les fourberies de Si Djeh'a, contes Kabyles, recueillis et traduits par August Mouliéras* (Paris 1892); cf.: René Basset, *Recherches sur Si Djoh'a et les anecdotes qui lui sont attribués*, 1–79.
34. *Ital'yanskiye skazki, obrabotannīye Italo Kal'vino* (M. 1959), 180–189.
35. Cf. Christensen, *Júhi in Pers. lit.*, 129–136; Ethé, *Essays*, 238–257; Klimovich, *Khrestomatiya, passim*; Christensen, *Märchen*, 13; Mann–Hadank, *Zâzâ*, 41; Mann–Hadank, *Khunsâr*, CIV; Mann, *Lur-Dial.*, XXX; Miller, *Talīshskiye tekstī*, V.
36. *Kurd.sk.*, 100–102; Romaskevich, *Persid. nar. sk.*, 267–272; *Persidskiye skazki* (1958), 75–84; Ivanova, 'Pyandzhikent. govor', *TIYa*, VI, 304–309; *Tadzhik. nar. sk.*, 363–367; Klimovich, *Khrestomatiya*, 125–127; Andreyev–Peshchereva, *Yagnob. tekstī*, 96–101, 149–153, 153–161, 184–186.
37. Cf. Hikāyāt, *Persische Schnurren; Tadzhik. nar. sk.*, 375–473; *Afg. sk.*, 7, 115–155.

IV. IRANIAN ENTERTAINMENT FOLK-LITERATURE

A. COLLECTIONS OF FABLES, PARTICULARLY *KALĪLA AND DIMNA*

Like the majority of oriental peoples, the Iranians are not fond of crude utterances, except in the case of proverbs. Instead of definitions, the Iranians prefer a concrete, though often fictitious story, which may take the form of a short narrative, a parable, or a fable. It is left to the audience to draw final conclusions from the indirectly implied truth. Perhaps this is a sign of true oriental courtesy, but without doubt the inborn urge to find the most elegant and pleasing way of expressing ideas plays a part.

It must not be forgotten that the Iranian passionately loves discussions back and forth, regardless of whether his part is that of an attentive and interested listener, or whether he has something to say himself. After all, most of the stories were intended to fulfil no mean task, notably to give advice to anyone willing to take it.

A favourite narrative form are fables in which the heroes are very often animals.

In the Islamic world two collections of fables have become particularly famous. These are the *Fables of Luqmān* and *Kalīla and Dimna*.[1] The *Fables of Luqmān* are essentially the fables of Aesop. Their alleged author is also mentioned in the Koran. By far the most popular, however, are the fables we know as *Kalīla and Dimma*. They are derived from a whole series of Buddhist Sanskrit texts. Nowadays it has already become very difficult to ascertain what the Indian model was like, since the Middle-Persian translator worked independently and adapted the stories so thoroughly to the conditions and taste of his own age and country, that it is more accurate to call his work a paraphrase or adaptation than a translation proper. A Pahlavi version, the existence of which stands beyond all doubt, was named after the two jackals of the frame-story. It dates from about 550 A.D., thus during the reign of Khusrau Anō-

sharvān. It is associated with the legendary physician Burzōē, and with the no less legendary figure of the vizier Buzurgmihr.[2]

About two hundred years later this Pahlavi source served as model for the Arabic version of 'Abdu'llāh ibn al-Muqaffa', and in this Arabic form the famous collection of fables returned to Iran.[3]

Rūdakī appears to be the first to have attempted a Persian translation.[4] He was succeeded by other adapters, some of whom completed, others abbreviated, while still others were tempted to do a complete recasting of the story. All such versions belong definitely to polite literature and have had little effect on folk-literature. Strangely enough, however, the Arabic version has had a comparatively wider influence. It would certainly seem true that this is a case where polite literature influenced folk-tales, rather than the other way round.

Two of the literary adaptations ought at least to be mentioned here, namely the *Marzbān-nāma*[5] by Ispahbad Marzbān b. Rustam b. Sharvīn (11th century A.D.) and the *Anvār-i Suhaylī* by Kāshifī (15th century A.D.). Kāshifī makes extensive additions to the original Indian core. The adaptation, which comprises a great deal of Iranian material, turned out to be such an affected affair that it appealed only to the educated classes – its effect on true folk-literature was slight and of no consequence.[6]

B. 'MIRRORS FOR PRINCES' AND OTHER ENTERTAINING AND INSTRUCTIVE LITERATURE

This branch of polite literature, which is very popular with the Iranians, was also noticeably influenced by motifs and subjects taken from folk-tradition. Little or no difference was made between real 'Mirrors for Princes' and literature intended to instruct and edify the rest of the population.

The important thing was to use parables that were familiar to the author's contemporaries so that the maxim or moral in view should be brought home and impressed upon the audience mnemonically. Again and again folk-tradition was found to be the richest source of short stories, of which it contains an endless supply. For all that, it certainly seems true to say that the popular flavour was somewhat diluted to suit the tastes of the upper classes.

Andarz, or *Pand-nāmak*, as this form of literature was called at the time of the Sasanians, was a great favourite with the Arabs of the early Islamic period and many translation were made, mainly by islamised Iranians. The need for Arabic versions was all the greater since the Iranians, newly converted to Islam, soon lost their ability to read Pahlavi characters and to understand the old language. The only remaining exceptions were a small number of *dihqāns*, petty country noblemen, who held on to their old

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culture and customs for a time, though not all of them with the same tenacity. Another important factor was that besides holding most of the government posts in the service of their Arab rulers, the Iranian officials had to keep their capricious masters amused and sometimes even had to educate them.

The most important works of this genre are the *Qābūs-nāma* and the *Siyāsat-nāma*[7]. The former is richer in motifs borrowed from folk-literature (i.e. anecdotes and proverbs), but the *Siyāsat-nāma* also is not devoid of folklore narrative material. If we consider the story of Bahrām Gor and his vizier Rāst-Rāvish, or again that of Siyāvush[8], we see that the ideology of both works is based on explicitly feudal principles, and the same holds good for many more works in this genre.

Even writers preaching Ṣūfism liked to exploit folk-literature as a source of motifs and subjects, e.g. Farīdu'd-dīn 'Aṭṭār with his *Tadhkiratu'l-auliyā*, Jalālu'd-dīn Rūmī in his *Fīhi mā fīhi* and his *Mathnavī*.[9] A very large number of motifs and subjects from folk-tradition were recorded and elaborated by Muḥammad 'Aufī in his voluminous *Javāmi'u'l-ḥikāyāt*. The ideology of these works conforms to the orthodox view of the world and hardly ever allows the original milieu to manifest itself. Much the same applies to other works and authors, e.g. the *Gulistān* of Sa'dī, Jāmī's *Bahāristān*, and others.[10]

The countless small episodic tales about various Sasanian kings such as Anōsharvān and Bahrām[11], like the wealth of stories about other great persons of this world, the tales with Buzurgmihr as central character and the numerous legends describing the lives of poets and philosophers – all these were obviously of an instructive and moralising nature. Also the manner in which many figures were idealised (for instance Ḥusayn Bāyqarā in the Navā'ī stories[12]) seems to be determined by an attempt to make the rulers of the past, or their successors, conform, at any rate in the traditions, to the vain wishes of their subjects. It is possible, however, that the tales just mentioned were written to order for the ruling classes with the aim of levelling out and concealing social differences. The philosophy expressed in moralistic and didactic literature also has a strong 'popular' flavour, since it is primarily concerned with questions of practical ethics.[13]

Moralistic and didactic entertainment literature always clung firmly to one basic idea: no matter how difficult and ill-advised it was to oppose feudal abuses openly, moralistic and didactic literature of all ages has always tried to impress upon those in power that the ancient and praiseworthy models advocate a benevolent form of government. Such good counsel was presented in a humble, submissive, even servile manner. Any danger the author might risk was further lessened by a suitable choice of themes and universally known subjects from folk-literature, so that not he, the author, but the collective and anonymous creators of folk-tales and folk-literature would be responsible. When all is said and done, one has to admit the possibility that much of the material in books of this kind was quite intentionally cast in a popular tone in order to make it look like folk-literature.[14]

C. THE IRANIAN ELEMENT IN THE *BOOK OF A THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS* AND SIMILAR COLLECTIONS

There is another, very substantial group of works of an entertaining character (although the edifying purpose is here less noticeable and of secondary consideration) in which the Iranian element is much in evidence and of great importance. In these cyclic works, or framework compositions, of the type of the *Book of a Thousand and One Nights* and the *Ṭūṭī-nāma*, 'Parrot Book', etc. it matters little that many Arabic and Turkish elements have also been clustered round a definitely Iranian core. In fact this only increases the importance of the Iranian nucleus, for it proves that by using Iranian material and following an Iranian example, non-Iranian folk-literature was inspired to creative imitation. It remains somewhat doubtful to what extent there was also a direct Indian influence.

The old *Sindbād-nāmak*, 'The Book of the Seven Viziers', which subsequently became well known and very popular throughout the Islamic East, was certainly of Indian origin. Likewise the *Book of Bilauhar and Buddhasaf*, a remote forerunner of several West-European romances about Barlaam and Yosaphat, also sprang from Indian sources. Iranian versions always formed the connecting link, and it was also the Iranians who passed on the technique of telling a story within another story (framework technique)[15], which undoubtedly also came from India. There are nowadays few works of entertainment in existence in which this technique was not used. Later on the Iranians were no longer content to write simple frame stories – the latter became more and more complex, while further frame stories were built into some of the stories of the original frame. Even this was not enough and another series of small stories was inserted, so that the final product often turned into a four-fold frame. The question whether this was the result of trends which were also responsible for epic cyclisation, or whether it was a parallel development, is unimportant.

The core of the *Book of a Thousand and One Nights* is thus undoubtedly Iranian. It is modelled on the Middle-Persian prose folk-book *Hazār afsānak*, which was Iranian throughout in character, even if a few Indian motifs had crept in. Gradually several works that had previously existed independently were included in the *Book of a Thousand and One Nights*. Of Iranian origin are in the first place all the real fairy-tales, characterised by the intervention of good or evil forces or beings in the hero's fate. The question becomes less clear in the case of the jesting stories, for these contain a great deal of Indian material, although the contributions made by the Iranians are no less important.[16]

There is no doubt of the Iranian origin of the frame story of the royal brothers *Shahriyār and Shāhzamān* and their unfaithful wives or of the inserted episodic stories – the story of the woman shut up in a chest, The Merchant and his Wife, The

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Ass and the Ox, The Cock and the Dog. Then there are the stories of the Merchant, the Ghost and the Three Old Men (an Iranian tale but maybe not a part of the original *Hazār afsānak*), The Fisherman and the Ghost, The Three Apples (modified to the extent that it takes place in the time of Hārūn ar-Rashīd), The Porter, The Three Ladies and the Three Qalandars (also altered and transferred to Hārūn ar-Rashīd), The Magic Horse, Ḥasan from Baṣra, Prince Badr and Princess Jauhar from Samandal, Ardashīr and Ḥayāt an-nufūs, Qamar az-zamān and Queen Budūr – all of which form part of the Iranian core in the *Book of a Thousand and One Nights*, i.e. the original *Hazār afsānak*.

More dubious are the stories about the hunchback and the various funny mishaps with the corpse, concerning which we cannot be altogether sure that they belonged to the original *Hazār afsānak*. The stories of the barber are in essence Iranian, but have been elaborated and interpolated with Arabic episodes to such an extent that it is already difficult nowadays to make out their original shape and size. Definitely Iranian too are the Tale about Aḥmad and the fairy Parībānū, and the Story of the Jealous Sisters. Whether they were part of the *Hazār afsānak* is doubtful and in fact unlikely, since these stories are to be found in one version only.

A great deal of Iranian material may also be concealed among the later stories that belong to the so-called Baghdad or even Egyptian group, but it is hard to recognise since it has been chopped and changed about so thoroughly. Among these are quite a number of repetitions, sometimes with different titles, as for instance the Story of Tāju'l-mulūk – a counterpart to the story of Ardashīr and Ḥayāt an-nufūs, or the Story of Jahānshāh – a counterpart to the tale of Ḥasan from Baṣra.

Finally there are in the *Book of a Thousand and One Nights* a number of formerly independent epic cycles, many of which are of Iranian derivation. The first of these are the various books about viziers (the number of viziers varies between seven, ten and forty). The best known are the *Sindbād-nāma* (about seven viziers) and the *Bakhtiyār-nāma* (ten viziers). Other stories which used to be independent are the one about *Shīmās and Kal'ād, Ḥāsib and the Snake-queen, Saifu'l-mulūk,* and a few other shorter ones. To discuss all this in detail would require a special study, for in many ways it would go beyond the scope of the present essay.

Proper names are a great help and rarely let one down when determining the origin of a story. If they are Persian it means they are original and prove the subject in question to be of Persian origin too. On the other hand, if one finds Arabic names in Iranian stories (which happens particularly in the magic fairy-tales), they have been invented and substituted for the Iranian ones later on. The classification of certain subjects may also reveal many things which appear to be Arabic but are in fact Iranian or Indo-Iranian. Similarly some very well-known Indo-European motifs appear here in circumstances which are tangibly Iranian in character and origin. We mention only a few: the exaggeration in numbers, the magic horse, the knowledge of animal language, people changing into animals, a spirit as principal character in a

story, several snake stories, the motif of the discarded coat of swan feathers, the cloak of invisibility, and the rusty dagger signifying that the donor has died.[17]

Certain motifs in the ancient *Hazār afsānak*, including the possibly Indian models, are to be found in several works of Indian literature too. Thus Cosquin likes to regard the following works as the models for the frame story of the *Thousand and One Nights*: the Thirty-two Throne Stories (*Sinhāsana Dvatrinśatikā*), the Vampire Stories (*Vetālapañcavinśatikā*), The Seventy Parrot-stories (*Śukasaptati*), the Ocean of Stories (*Kathāsaritsāgara*), several Buddhist collections (From the Three Hampers – *Tripitaka*) and the 536th tale of the *Jātakas*. It is also thought possible that parts were derived from the *Pañcatantram*.[18] Meanwhile the Indian material was so completely iranised that there can be no question of the *Thousand and One Nights* being a direct descendant of an Indian model.

The influence of this work has always, and particularly in the Near East, been very strong. Many stories in different parts, for instance that of Sayfu'l-mulūk and others too, reverted to folk-literature. It is most remarkable that it was just the epic cycles, that had formerly been independent, that had the greatest effect in this direction. Quite often too, typically Arabic subjects from the *Book of the Thousand and One Nights* found their way into Iranian folk-literature. O. Mann, for example, recorded a version of the story about the butcher Vardān in Nayīn.[19] However, the influence of motifs and even complete subjects can be noticed much further afield, one might say throughout the whole domain of Iranian culture. To illustrate this we need only mention the Iranian influence in the Uzbek *dāstāns* (Seipulmelik among others), the Baluchi story of the Forty Thieves[20], or the Story of the Judge and his Wife among the Zāzā[21], to find examples in the east as well as the west.

In Western Europe there are many Old- and Middle-French *fabliaux* which seem to show considerable oriental influence. No doubt this can be attributed to the effect of subjects from the *Book of the Thousand and One Nights*, for they would have spread to the Christian West, particularly as a result of the crusades.[22]

Many famous collections of fairy-tales and short stories to be found in polite literature, parts of which at least are derived from folk-tradition, are linked up with each other either by a frame story or through a common basic idea that they are supposed to illustrate and explain, which they usually do very cleverly. To this category belongs the ancient *Bakhtiyār-nāma*[23], 'The Book of the Ten Viziers', already referred to. This is a frame story and taken as a whole a Moslem counterpart to the even older *Sindbād-nāma*[24], which appears to have been inspired by an Indian model. Still more obvious is the Indian origin of the *Ṭūṭī-nāma*, although many Iranian motifs were used in it too, especially outside the frame. The Persian version, containing several subjects borrowed from Iranian folk-literature, is however no more than a selection from the Indian collection *Śukasaptati*, for instead of the Indian seventy, there are here only fifty-two Iranian tales.

Actually there are a great number of other similar Persian collections of stories

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whose titles mention varying numbers of viziers, dervishes and parrots, etc. Indian material replaces the Iranian more and more however, and it can be said of all this polite literature of entertainment that these works have lost all traces of their relation to folk-literature. Interesting as they may be from a point of view of cultural history, we cannot discuss them here.

D. *THE THOUSAND AND ONE DAYS*

This collection of fairy-tales and novel-like stories is an Iranian counterpart to the Arabian *Thousand and One Nights*. It is obviously a more recent imitation with a cognate frame story but with the difference that the latter and all the interspersions are addressed to a beautiful princess who is prejudiced against men. Over and over again the princess's nurse narrates stories about faithful lovers and husbands until ultimately she achieves her object, the princess renounces her prejudice and consents to be married. This principal frame story contains a number of secondary frame stories and in some cases even tertiary tales, so that some of the frame stories are interrupted again and again by the insertion of other narratives. The *Thousand and One Days* contains versions of many tales closely related to folk-literature, the subjects being common to the whole of the Islamic Near East. The majority of the subjects used is of Iranian provenance.[25]

The question as to whether the *Thousand and One Days* is of oriental origin – or a European imitation, falsification or paraphrase – is somewhat complicated. This problem would be hard to solve if we tried to investigate it from the position of literary history or philology. But from a folkloristic standpoint we can easily explain all difficulties. A hyper-critical philologist might be suspicious in view of the absence of a Persian manuscript, only a French translation by Pétis de la Croix (1653–1713) being available. This can be explained very simply. The original Persian work used by the translator (according to his own statement) did not fall into the category of polite literature, but was a unique folk-book in manuscript. It may also have been a *kitābcha,* i.e. an *aide-mémoire* for a professional story-teller. Mukhliṣ – Pétis says Moclès – was a dervish and these folk have always been propagators of folk-tales and other products of folk-literature; very often they were professional story-tellers. It is quite acceptable to suppose that Mukhliṣ neither would nor could relinquish his unique aid. The copy used by Pétis de la Croix was not considered by him to be worthy of preservation after he had translated it. Then there is no doubt about the authenticity of the translator's preface and it is useless to say that Pétis' statement on Mukhliṣ' authorship of the *Thousand and One Days* is fictitious. Pétis de la Croix was an eminent stylist, not only in his native tongue but also in oriental languages, and therefore it is

quite probable that he smoothed out some unevennesses in the style and expression of the original work. Pétis may have kept the oriental features of his model untouched and made an accurate translation which is undoubtedly a masterpiece. The extremely high artistic quality of the *Thousand and One Days* is most remarkable even in a French adaptation and translation, but is not contradictory to the qualification of the model as a folk-book. Elegant and refined as it may be, the translation of the *Thousand and One Days* can be described as simple and free of baroque bombast and rococo affectation. If we tried to retranslate the Persian model from the French, we should see that such a reconstruction would differ very considerably from the torrent of words in the post-classical Persian literary prose of the period in question. And this is just the quintessence of the matter: folk-books arose as a reaction against the bombast of polite literature, both in the European West and the Asiatic East. We must also consider whether Pétis de la Croix (or anybody else of that period) had any reason to become the author of a mystification. Pétis de la Croix was certainly an eminent expert in oriental studies, he was thoroughly familiar with oriental life, customs, languages and literature as well as being a gifted artist; but it is extremely doubtful whether he would have intended and allowed his name to be connected with any mystification, for after all he occupied a high position and possessed great capacities, having first served in the French diplomatic service – where he proved his uncommon incorruptibility – and afterwards having been professor of oriental languages. It is beyond any doubt that he, as a *savant* and a man of diplomatic integrity, could not commit forgery, and indeed would not be likely to risk his prestige by doing so. Pétis de la Croix was certainly not a romanticist. And the romantic period, characterised as it was by numerous literary falsifications, forged historical documents and last but not least historical romances, began more than half a century later and culminated more than a whole century after Pétis de la Croix started to publish his translation of the *Thousand and One Days* (1710 A.D.).

On the basis of our present knowledge of the theory of oriental folk-tradition and polite literature, we may well declare that the *Thousand and One Days* is irrefutably of Persian origin on account of its content, colouring and composition, and that even at the present day a large group of orientalists and poets would be hard put to it to imitate this collection of tales. Consequently we can be sure of the absurdity of taking Pétis de la Croix as the author of the work. He was too much occupied with his official duties to have been in a position to spend much time is seeking and making use of the sources. He was not the person to enter into such a difficult investigation or to attempt to disguise his authorship by introducing a fictitious story about Mukhliṣ. *The Thousand and One Days* (the Persian title was probable *Hazār u yak rūz*, but other titles are not excluded) was arranged and recorded by a highly educated man, well versed in the realm of fairy-tales and stories from everyday life and moreover closely acquainted with polite literature. This can easily be proved, for instance, by the fact that the tale about Ibn Sīnā is a paraphrase of his biography. The author must have

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been familiar with the oriental way of life, for he demonstrates an extensive knowledge and mastery of this subject, which forms an intrinsic part of the whole work. Under such conditions it is obvious that not a European man of letters but the Persian dervish Mukhliṣ was the only person fully capable of answering the requirements of authorship. The French translator may have not only improved the style in the French translation but may also have made various corrections in the wording for ethical reasons. We can well suppose that the title of *Thousand and One Days*, and consequently even the division of the whole book into days – often very short – may have been done by Pétis de la Croix. It is noteworthy that the 190th day is followed by the 960th without any break in continuity. The explanation may be simple, however. The numbers were of secondary importance and the text, as arranged by Pétis, may be merely an extract of a larger collection. It is possible that not only have some portions of the text of some of the stories, or of one day, been abbreviated, but even some substantial parts of the collection been omitted entirely. On the other hand the Pahlavi version of the *Thousand and One Nights* did not contain the full number of nights either, and the 'thousand' may perhaps be interpreted as 'a very large but unspecified number'.

The tales of Prince Kalaf and the Chinese princess Tūrāndukht[26] and that of Avicenna[27] are among the most interesting parts of the collection. But the other tales too possess great fascination owing to their ethical and artistic value. The stories from *Thousand and One Days* had a strong influence on European culture, especially Italian literature, above all the *Fiabe* by Carlo Gozzi,[28] and this applies not only to Turandot but also to some of the others. The epical subject of Turandot entered even into German literature through a translation and adaptation from the hand of Friedrich Schiller.[29]

NOTES

1. Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 331, 346, 347; Carra de Vaux, *Les penseurs de l'Islam*, I (Paris 1921); 346; *Qur'ān*, s. XXXI; cf. Lübker, *Reallexikon*, 358–359; *Kalila i Dimna* (Krachkovskiy, Vvedeniye), 9–23; Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 326; Schulthess, *Kalīla und Dimna* (B. 1911), 'Einleitung', p. IX.
2. Nöldeke, *Burzōēs Einleitung zu dem Buche Kalīla wa Dimna* (Strassburg 1922).
3. Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 326; Brockelmann, *GAL*, I, 151, *GAL* ('Amelang'), 97; Massé, *Les versions persanes des contes d'animaux, passim*; cf. Khanna al'-Fakhuri, *Ist. arab. liter.*, I, 334–363, mainly 343–356 (very important!)
4. Ayni, *Ustod Rudaki, passim;* Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 123–148.
5. Cf. *The Tales of Marzuban*, translated from the Persian by Reuben Levy (Bloomington 1959) (with an important preface!).
6. Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 326–328; Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 328–332; Schulthess, *op. cit.*, IX; *Kalila i Dimna* (Krachkovskiy, Vvedeniye), 12, 15, 16.

7. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 362–363; Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 347, 349.
8. *Siyāsat-nāma*, 4th chapter, Russian translation 25–32, 43rd chapter, Russian transl. 180–181; Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 363.
9. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 370–374; cf. also Rumi, *Pritchi, perevod s persid.* (M. 1963).
10. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 304–312, 327–328, 370–374.
11. *Siyāsat-nāma*, Russian transl., 35–43, 139–142, 173, 182, 186, 190–204, *et passim.*
12. Bertel's *Navoi*, 258–265.
13. Cf. Horten, *Philosophie des Islam*, 264–274.
14. Cf. Bertel's, *Roman ob Aleksandre, passim*; Pizzi, *Storia della Poesia Persiana*, chapter VII/1; Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides*, 431 *et seq.*
15. Cf. Grintser, P.A., *Drevneindiyskaya proza (Obramlennaya povest')* (M. 1963), a standard work with extensive bibliography; Grintser, 'Literaturnïe i fol'klornïye svyazi sanskritskoy obramlennoy povesti', in *Vzaimosvyazi literatur Vostoka i Zapada* (M. 1961), 182–234; cf. also Cosquin, E., *Le prologue-cadre des Mille et une nuits – Les légendes perses et le livre d'Esther* (Paris 1909).
16. Christensen, *Märchen*, 10, 12; cf. also B. Heller, in *Anm. zu KHM*, IV, 397–410.
17. Oestrup, *Studien über* 1001 *Nacht*, 106–109, *et passim.*
18. Cf. Lahy-Hollebecque, *Le féminisme de Schéhérazade*, 6; *Panchatantra* (M. 1958); *Dvadtsat'pyat' rasskazov vetalï* (M. 1958).
19. Mann-Hadank, *Khunsâr*, CVI.
20. Sokolova, *Ocherki po fonetike iran. yaz.*, I, 61–64.
21. Mann-Hadank, *Zâzâ*, 40.
22. Cf. Bédier, *Les Fabliaux*, 5th ed. (Paris 1925); Voretzsch, *Einf. in das Studium der altfranz. Literatur*, 2nd ed. (Halle 1913), 409–414, 455–457.
23. Cf. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 303–304.
24. Cf. Braginskiy, *Ocherki*, 301–303; cf. also Samarkandi, *Sindbadname* (M. 1960).
25. Cf. *Mille et un jours* (Paris 1838), 1–3.
26. *Mille et un jours*, 45th–47th, 60th–82nd day (pp. 69–73, 89–117).
27. *Mille et un jours*, 135th–141st day (pp. 180–186).
28. Gozzi, Carlo, *Skazki dlya teatra* (M. 1956), with an essay by Mokul'skiy, 'Karlo Gotstsi i ego skazki dlya teatra' (3–38) – a concise but excellent introduction.
29. Schiller, Friedrich, *Gedichte – Übersetzungen*, publ. by P. Merker (Lpz., Reclam, s.a.).

V. WRITTEN FORMS OF FOLK-LITERATURE*

A. FOLK-BOOKS – THE FORERUNNERS OF FOLK-PRINTS

The increasing penetration of Arabic elements into the late-classical and post-classical Persian literary language, which reached alarming proportions particularly during the decline at the end of the Safavid rule and continued until the middle of the 19th century, is probably chiefly responsible for the appearance of a great number of folk-books.

Any form of bombast has always been completely alien to the inborn artistic sense and feeling of the common Iranian, even when we bear in mind his preference for a flowery style and elegant ways of expression. In their tastes and interests the common townspeople had always been opposed in principle to the aristocratic and quasi-aristocratic aesthetes and their affectations. Not surprisingly, therefore, they looked around for other and more suitable sources of entertainment, amusement and edification, paying particular attention to lucidity in the expression of ideas as well as in style and language. These demands were as a rule only met by folk-books. The subject-matter of these cheap and generally unique little works depended almost entirely on polite literature; firm favourites were the old *Shāh-nāma* motifs, and episodes from the romantic epics of polite literature. A few of these folk-books, it is true, reached a higher level and measure of perfection than the mostly professional abstracts from larger works. One cannot deny them a certain independence where conception and development are concerned, but on the whole the role of the anonymous author is restricted to simplifying the extremely involved episodes and eliminating or at least partly replacing excessive janglings of words, whenever turns of phrase were incomprehensible to a common Persian.

The subjects used were mostly romantic, erotic and semi-romantic and semi-fictional. Some of the post-classical literary collections of fairy-tales, of which there

is a fair number, really started their existence as prose folk-books. These became such favourites with the people that a need was felt to 'refine' the folk-character of the much-loved stories, at least as far as the style was concerned.

The number of folk-books that have been preserved is in itself not very large – in most cases we have only indirect evidence to go by. Their true importance, however, is incomparably greater, even if they never became so widespread as the products of polite literature. Iranian prose folk-books nevertheless played an impressive part in the spreading of Iranian subjects, particularly to Central Asia and among the Uzbeks.[1]

B. FOLK-PRINTS IN GENERAL

The folk-prints form an organic continuation of the earlier prose folk-books in manuscript form. Actually the transition from one to the other took place gradually. Folk-prints appear in the form of slender stitched booklets, printed on poor quality paper and provided with very primitive and naïve illustrations. The size is generally an eighth or sixteenth of a printed sheet. If the booklet contains more than two or three printed sheets, it is bound. In that case the cover is provided with drawings supposed to be reminiscent of the decorations on the covers of old manuscripts. A useful survey of folk-prints is given in the standard treatise on the subject – Bertel's' *Persidskaya lubochnaya literatura.*[2] Educated Persians, or those who consider themselves as such, have little respect for these books and even look down on them, leaving it to small craftsmen and traders in the towns and to individual, only partly literate villagers in the country to read and distribute the folk-prints. But this critical attitude should by no means mislead one as to the importance of the prints for folk-literature in Iran. It is enough to mention one small detail, namely that several story-tellers have so far moved with the times that instead of the manuscript *kitābcha,* they now use folk-prints to aid their memory and as a storehouse for their repertory.

C. FANTASTIC ROMANCES OF CHIVALRY IN FOLK-PRINT FORM

Fantastic romances of chivalry are the most common category of folk-prints. These booklets bear the most varied titles: *Nushāfarīn, Khusravī, Dīvzād*[3], and many more. The contents follow a fairly strict pattern and there are but few and insignificant deviations from the general scheme.

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A handsome prince (*Shāh-zāda*) falls in love with a beautiful maiden (as a rule a princess) in a far distant land. A picture of her has been shown to him beforehand, or sometimes a report or a dream is enough to awaken his passion. The prince sets out to seek his bride and in the course of the journey has a number of extraordinary adventures. Frequently he is helped or hindered by supernatural powers, he overcomes all the adversaries and obstacles that cross his path and finally returns triumphantly to his native land with his fair prize. As in polite literature, the main story is interrupted by episodes in which subsidiary characters are introduced. Often these folk-romances of chivalry are adaptations of motifs from the *Shāh-nāma* or other classical heroic or romantic epics, and the universally familiar subjects are further richly elaborated. Not infrequently such folk-prints carry on with the plot where polite literature left off, describing a series of further happenings that are freely invented and probably not based on any model we know.

Connections with epics belonging to the field of polite literature are often very easy to establish. In some instances at least, it is a case of mutating relationships since sometimes the prototype is in verse and belongs to polite literature, or it may be the other way round, i.e. the model is in prose and finds its origin in folk-literature while the adaptation falls into the category of polite literature. The link in both directions will usually prove to be a prose folk-book in manuscript form.

There is not the slightest doubt that this type of folk-literature is a product of the feudal system. European equivalents, in subject-matter as well as treatment and artistic value, are the mediaeval folk-romances of chivalry.

These fantastic romances of chivalry in folk-print form are in most cases definitely not progressive – an interesting proof that the ruling classes of late feudal Iran, aware of the instability of their position, did not hesitate to make use of new technical advances in order to force their own ideology on their subjects.

It is nevertheless most correct, when classifying these works, to place them on the periphery of Persian feudal polite literature. Their social purpose is simply to penetrate to the masses.

It must certainly be admitted that it is not possible to find prototypes for all of the folk-prints. However, it would still be rash to assume on these grounds that any of them are quite original, for it is very likely that many of them consisted of contaminations of single motifs and were compiled from various sources. One should not expect high artistic qualities in these literary by-products – they were mostly of the shilling shocker variety. They were intended to gloss over the miseries brought about by the decline of feudalism and to divert public attention to trivial and harmless (from the upper-class viewpoint) matters. And this is precisely why this branch of folk-literature should be considered unprogressive and at the same time a symbol of decline, although there may be isolated exceptions about which one might say the opposite if if were possible to see them as anything more than exceptions.

Society and its actual political conditions sometimes even influence such subjects

as one would expect to have been firmly canonised long ago. We have already discussed this peculiar fact in connection with the *dāstāns*. Here we find a further example of the strange things authors of folk-print romances were forced to do (even in the 19th century) by the obstinate and fanatical orthodoxy of the Moslem theologians. The figure of Rustam in particular had to suffer many adaptations and modifications that were quite unavoidable – Iran's greatest heroic figure had to be completely islamised. There is a short epic in folk-print form, written in classical *mutaqārib*, and entitled *Rustam-nāma*, which was printed in Tehran in 1298/1880. It contains a large number of anachronisms (the caliph ʿAlī is turned into a contemporary of Rustam's) and in a host of other ways too the subject-matter and its treatment are deformed.[4] The traditional figure of Rustam, shaped by many centuries, is now endowed with a new and far more modern trait – namely that of a religious man, showing that he had turned to Islam, for in this folk-print the champion of the fire-worshippers is defeated by ʿAlī in single combat and is converted to the Shīʿa.

D. SHORT STORIES IN FOLK-PRINTS

Another category of folk-prints are the short stories, which in their turn may be divided into three basic types. They either appear as single stories in which the whole plot is rounded off and brought to a conclusion, or as cycles of short stories (the separate stories being sequels to each other), or again as frame stories in which the individual tales are really episodes within the frame.[5] Fantasy now retires into the background and supernatural powers enter the plot only in exceptional cases, at any rate far less frequently than in the folk-print romances of chivalry.

The principal characters are recruited mainly from the middle and lower classes of the population – they tend to be merchants, *qāḍīs*, artisans or other townsfolk. The subjects are mostly taken from everyday life with the town as scene of action. Again it is difficult to make out whether these subjects are original or are derived from polite literature. They are either popular adaptations of short stories or tales from polite literature, or they may be orally transmitted folk-traditions which later found their way into the latter, albeit merely as a basis that by means of artificial mannerisms became elevated to a grander style.

In works of this kind the folk-prints do show unmistakably progressive elements, and not infrequently a critical view is taken of social abuses. It is usually the holders of temporal or spiritual power at whom criticism is specifically levelled, and they are reproached with various wicked and reprehensible qualities, the chief of which are avarice, voluptuousness and greed. We are no longer regaled with often foolish scuffles between knights and *dēvs* or monsters. Instead, preference is given to subjects

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far closer to the everyday life of common people, arising from the continual encounters with their immediate oppressors.

Short stories in folk-print form too are known under varying titles: *Ra'nā u Zībā, Duzd u qāḍī*[6], often also *Laṭā'if, Ḥikāyat,* or something different again.[7]

The authors belong to the middle classes – as a rule they are townspeople, sometimes better-class artisans, humble citizens, just those whose lives were not characterised by luxury or by security from the various forms of oppression and the wilfulness of the aristocracy.

E. FOLK-TALES IN FOLK-PRINTS

Animal stories intended for children should be regarded as an introduction to animal fables of a more or less epical character. The mothers and grandmothers tell them to small children. For school-children there are folk-prints in which the anonymous authors have adapted the stories to their readers' power of comprehension. Little books of this kind are used in the schools as an introduction to folk-tale literature proper. The special juvenile literature known as *Bachcha-khvānī* really belongs to the people, and in many cases it makes up the entire mental nutriment of much older members of the uneducated peasant population. This explains why they are so widespread and have to be reprinted from time to time. Again there is a good variety of titles[8]: The Mice and the Cat, Auntie Frog, Aunt Ground-beetle, Mr. Sparrow, Wolf and Fox, etc. They are written in a very lively style, the language is concise, idiomatic and unadorned, and descriptions are mostly amusing, exciting and ingenious.

These editions cost very little and are illustrated with naïve folk-print pictures. The University Library at Leningrad has a large collection of them, brought together by V.A. Zhukovsky in the years between 1883 and 1886.[9] Professor Jan Rypka in Prague also possesses a fine collection of more recent publications in this genre.

For older children and also for adults, books of folk-prints are continually being reprinted. These exceedingly low-priced lithographs with their traditionally simple illustrations, which already formed part of the earliest folk-prints, often try to imitate literature proper in their choice of titles.

The way these and similar books are arranged is worth noting. The separate sections of these small anthologies deal successively with women, fools and judges. Very popular indeed are short anecdotes or funny stories. No matter how complicated these works are, they never lose the essential character of the folk-prints.[10]

Folk-print editions of separate folk-tales as mentioned by Romaskevich are much simpler.[11] Unfortunately it is very difficult to get any kind of thorough and reliable insight into this whole branch of folk-literature. There is no doubt, however, that an

intimate acquaintance with these stories would be an enormous help in tracing the development of single subjects and also in the study of cultural history.

F. DREAM-BOOKS AND HANDBOOKS FOR ASTROLOGERS AND FORTUNE-TELLERS

A very important place in folk-print literature is occupied by the literary products of superstition, i.e. dream-books and handbooks for astrologers and fortune-tellers. The explanation is fairly simple: a deep-rooted preoccupation with the occult on the one hand, and the extremely hard living conditions of the petty citizens, minor tradesmen, shopkeepers and artisans in Iran on the other, provide an ideal climate for superstition to flourish, spread and penetrate the wide ranks of the middle and lower classes.

Fortune-telling is extremely widespread, and the most diverse methods are employed to probe the future. If a sacred text (Koran) is used, the practice is called *Istikhāra*, if it is a secular text or object, it is known as *Fāl*. Quite often fortune-telling is done by casting dice – this is called *Raml*. The interpreting of dreams is known as *Ta'bīr*.

The popularity of many of these works may be judged by the fact that the people use them to ensure success when forecasting the future. For this purpose the *dīvān* of Ḥāfiẓ is most often referred to, but sometimes also that of Sa'dī or the *Mathnavī* of Jalālu'd-dīn Rūmī. The procedure is largely the same as that employed in fortune-telling from the Koran: after an introductory formula or a short prayer, the book in question is opened, the person doing so having closed his eyes, in a special manner that is prescribed down to the smallest detail. These customs are minutely described by Massé.[12]

It is not surprising that there are so many handbooks for fortune-tellers and astrologers that for the most part belong to folk-print literature. Such popular works on astrology were almost certainly influenced up to a certain point by scientific literature on astronomy.

The same can be said of the dream-books in folk-print editions (though some of this material has been transmitted by word of mouth only). These too were probably based on more than one work of literature.

NOTES

* Cf. in general the excellent anthology of Persian folk-literature in Russian translation, published under the title *Plutovka iz Bagdada* (M. 1963), with a very instructive introduction by Yu. Borshchevskiy: 'Persidskaya narodnaya literatura' (5–26).

1. Cf. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op. cit., passim.*
2. See *s.v.* 'Bertel's' in the Bibliography; see also note * on p. 675.
3. Cf. *Plutovka iz Bagdada,* 14.
4. Romaskevich, *Ocherki izucheniya Shakhname,* 45; Zhukovskiy, *Musul'manstvo Rustama,* 109, 116–117.
5. Cf. Grintser, *Drevneindiyskaya proza* (M,. 1963).
6. Cf. Plutovka, 387–399.
7. Cf. *Persidskiye anekdoti* (M. 1963)(with a good preface by N. Osmanov), a very useful and comprehensive anthology of anecdotes.
8. Cf. Romaskevich, *Persid. nar. skazki,* 134–136, 203–204, 327–330, 356–366, 367–376, etc; *Persidskiye skazki* (1958), 452–455, 494–496.
9. Zhukovskiy, *Kolïbel'nïye pesni,* 110.
10. Christensen, *Märchen,* 15.
11. Romaskevich, *Persid. nar. sk.,* 12–14.
12. Massé, *Croyances,* 243–246.

VI. THE INFLUENCE OF FOLK-LITERATURE IN MODERN PERSIAN AND TAJIK LITERATURE

The ways in which modern Persian and Tajik literature have used subjects and motifs from folk-literature differ greatly from one another. In this field, however, Tajik authors have indisputably been the most successful in their technique of adapting separate motifs, and it is also in Tajik literature that the folk-tales and their motifs and subjects have been most productive in the creation of various literary masterpieces.

The pioneer in this case, as in other basic issues, was Sadriddin Aynī, the founder of modern Tajik literature who nowadays already ranks as a classical author. He made wide use of popular stories and folk-tales and also of their composition techniqe, and was so successful that many of his characters have become part of folk-tradition. Aynī in his turn was influenced by an eminent master who taught him to love and value folk-literature and who was none other than Maxim Gorky.

Aynī became the leader of a group of authors who may rightly be described as a 'school'. Influences from folk-tradition came to be felt in many fields, and especially in modern drama and in film scenarios, a form of literature which of course had never existed before.

A masterly achievement by the Pamir poet Mīrsayyid Mīrshakar, is the poem *Golden Qishlāq*. It is true that he remodelled and developed an old Pamir legend, but in doing so he treated the motifs from folk-literature in a manner both superior and highly artistic. Other Tajik poets followed suit, and that is why modern Tajik song-writing in particular is distinguished by folk-traits to such an extent that 'artistic' songs very often become real folk-songs. In works of an epic nature again we find many ancient motifs from old epics and folk-tales being used, but it is significant that, although ancient folk-traditions are carefully preserved, in form and interpretation they show a strong sense of realism.[1]

In modern Persian prose, on the other hand, a different state of affairs can be witnessed. Let us examine first under what influences modern New Persian literature began to develop and take shape. Just as in the case of Turkey, there was in Iran the

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influence of French literature. Curiously enough it was not the most valuable and classical works that had the greatest effect on the developing embryo of Persian prose, but to a large extent those French novels that were most popular at the time, and these were not always artistically the most advanced. Later the Turkish novel *Millī* also left a deep impression.

The first French works to be tackled were Molière's plays, these being adapted for use in school theatres. Very often names, particular situations and even whole scenes were made to conform to Persian conditions, so that in many cases it is better to speak of an 'iranisation' than a straight translation. Next came the novels of Jules Verne, Bernardin de Saint Pierre, and especially Alexandre Dumas. Two of the latter's novels, *Le Comte de Monte Christo* and *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, had a great effect on modern historical novel writing in Persia, albeit in a somewhat negative sense. The subjects of *The Avengers of Mazdak*, by San'atīzāda Kirmānī, or *Shams u Ṭughrā* by Khusravī, for instance, are certainly partly historical or quasi-historical, but the treatment of the subjects reminds us very strongly of the Dumas novels just mentioned, which can hardly be regarded as an advantage.

Matters are made even worse by the fact that most modern Persian novelists use isolated motifs from folk-literature only haphazardly and superficially. Subjects from early Iranian history profit from the recent upsurge of nationalism. What is really surprising is that the Achaemenids in particular are so popular. There would be no objection to this if it were not for the gross anachronisms produced and – what is far worse – if the names of the *dramatis personae* were not rendered in the transliterations of the French Herodotus translation (cf. Astiāzh etc.). Actually the characteristics of the various personages in Herodotus' *History* are reproduced most faithfully and without inventions of the author himself, no attempt even being made to adapt French transliterations of Greek name renderings to real or supposed Persian forms. History thus becomes no more than a colourful background for the story. It will be clear that historical novel writing in modern Persia leaves much to be desired, especially as regards the use of motifs from folk-literature.

Apart from the odd occasion when a modern author makes use of a classical theme for a film scenario or a play (the most popular is the story of *Farhād and Shīrīn* or *Khusrau and Shīrīn*) – and in most cases he will turn to the literary and not to the folk-version – the whole treasury of motifs from Iranian folk-literature is ignored by literary currents in Iran itself, and is even despised rather than valued.[2]

NOTES

1. Cf. *Sovetskiye pisateli Tadzhikistana*, 9, 12, 38.

2. Cf. Machalski, *Historyczna powieść perska, passim*; *Sovremennïy Iran, spravochnik* (M. 1957), 460–470; cf. also Komissarov, *Ocherki sovr. persid. prozï* (M. 1960).

VII. RELIGIOUS FOLK-LITERATURE

A. RELIGIOUS FOLK-LITERATURE AND ITS RELATIONS TO FOLK-TRADITION

When we consider how deeply the Iranian way of thinking has been influenced by Islam, and on the other hand how much the nation itself has contributed to its present form of literature from the treasures of its ancient culture and civilisation – an achievement that will never be equalled – it is not surprising to find that religious subjects have always played a prominent part in the development of both polite and folk-literature.

In this respect the question is nevertheless highly complex, chiefly because the thousand odd years during which Iranian, and particularly Persian, literature and culture developed saw so many changes in religious conceptions. The frequent changes of dynasty in the Middle Ages, with the accompanying vacillation between the Sunna and the Shī'a, meant that their subjects had – at any rate to outward appearances – to follow suit, for in the Moslem East the rule *cuius regio, eius religio* was also customarily observed. These are the reasons for the heterogeneous character of Persian literature devoted to religious subjects.[1] Only when the Shī'a finally triumphed after the Safavids had come into power was the direction determined in which later Persian religious polite literature was to develop.

As a contrast, religious folk-literature, in so far as it has come down to us at all, is not very old and therefore largely homogeneous. In Iran itself it is of an acknowledged and decided Shī'ite character.[2]

A very popular story among Shī'ite Iranians is that of the passion of 'Alī and his family; these themes are principally used in folk-drama, but there are also many adaptations in folk-book form. A logical result of this development, during which religious fanaticism increased, if anything, was the peculiar phenomenon that old

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Iranian epic subjects had to be islamised in order to make them conform to current trends. At the same time several religious motifs were made into epic cycles. To illustrate many similar examples it is perhaps sufficient to mention the *Khāvar-nāma* of Muḥammad b. Ḥusām (d. 875/1470).[3]

But of course religious folk-literature developed in another direction too. Bertel's draws attention to the collection of folk-prints, *Jāmi'u'l-ḥikāyāt*.[4] The purpose behind this collection is certainly a remarkable one – it was intended to vulgarise the most important Shī'ite doctrines in a form that would be accessible to the masses. However, it would be fruitless to look for a consistent explanation or systematic discussion of the separate theological problems for, unlike Christian literature of similar nature and intention, this work is rather designed to deal with curiosities. The central idea emphasised is the characteristic common to all heroes, namely the determination to suffer every privation and torment without complaint with the sole aim of earning a reward after death.

Judged purely objectively, this ideology – designed to divert the people from the real cause of their distress – as well as the folk-prints which propagate it, is by no means a sign of progress, either in a literary sense or with regard to its effect on society.

B. RELIGIOUS FOLK-LITERATURE AS PRIMARY STAGE IN IRANIAN FOLK-DRAMA

An important figure, particularly from the point of view of cultural history, is the Iranian *parda-zan*, who in his performances glorifies the martyrdom of 'Abbās. It is but a small step from alluding to simple pictures as accompaniment to a narrative about a saint, to having his story actually dramatised by live persons.[5]

There was certainly no lack of subjects. There exist a large number of legends about the Prophet's family and other martyrs who sacrificed their lives for their religious ideals. These legends are known throughout the Moslem East, while there are also numerous figures of more local significance. All these together provided the oriental imagination with enormous scope for development in many directions.[6]

The Iranians have a natural aptitude for the theatre, but there were many difficulties in the way of dramatic performances, mainly owing to religious inhibitions. The only dramatic forms that were acceptable to and not forbidden by the Moslem theologians were those that conformed to their philosophy. And this is why religious drama was able to gain quite a respectable reputation, whereas the old traditional dramatic forms were somewhat harshly condemned by the theologians. This, incidentally, did nothing to diminish their popularity with the broad masses of the people.

NOTES

1. Cf. Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 329–331.
2. Cf. Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 330–331; a counterpart to the work by Rudi Paret, *Die legendäre Maghāzi-Literatur* (Tübingen 1930), does not exist, although such a work would be very useful for analyzing motifs and epic subjects borrowed from folk-poetry by religious literature, as well as for comparative research.
3. Cf. Krïmskiy, *Ist. Persii i eyo liter.* (Bibl. Bv), III, 121.
4. Cf. Bertel's, *Persidskaya "lubochnaya" literatura*, 88, 89.
5. Cf. Galunov, *Narodnïy teatr Irana*, 67–69, also illustrations (73–75).
6. Cf. Ethé, *Np. Lit.*, 330–331; but see also Paret, *op. cit.*

VIII. DRAMATIC FOLK-LITERATURE IN IRAN

A. THE *TA'ZIYAS* AND OTHER RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS, AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT[1]

Among the Shī'ites, i.e. nowadays particularly among the Persians, in many parts of Mesopotamia and in the districts of India that fall under the cultural influence of Islam, annual dramatic performances are held (or at any rate used to be held until very recently) portraying the death of 'Alī and his sons Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. According to Shī'ite doctrine, of course, 'Alī is the only legitimate successor to the Prophet.

The difference between Christian passion plays and the *ta'ziyas* is mainly that the latter are versed paraphrases of Islamic traditions, whereas European passion plays reproduce texts taken from the Bible or at least from the Apocrypha.

The dramatic cycle of *ta'ziyas* is intended to glorify the memory of the Prophet's family. The principal characters are Ḥusayn and his brother Ḥasan. Besides these we also find, however, the Old Testament figures Jacob and Joseph, Eve and Rachel, and the New Testament Mary; but the most prominent are the Prophet's other relatives – in addition to Muḥammad himself we find 'Alī, Fāṭima, the other brothers and sisters of the two brothers and their children, as well as a host of further episodic figures and supernumeraries, all of whom serve only to set off the protagonist. The *ta'ziyas* are written in verse-form.

Two figures who play an important part are, first, the *vā'iẓ* (the preacher) who is usually a *mullā*, and secondly the *rauḍa-khvān* (prompter or narrator), whose task it is to recount the passion story of the Prophet's family. It often happens, however, that the *rauḍa-khvān* takes on the duties of the *vā'iẓ* as well, so that he first recites the prologue and then delivers the funeral sermon (*khuṭba*) during which he mentions the appropriate *ḥadīths*. Ranged around him is a boys' choir who do duty as women

mourners. This is unavoidable since in the *ta'ziyas* only men and boys are allowed to appear on the stage. Female parts have to be taken by dressed-up men with disguised voices, as for instance in the laments of widows and mothers. All this is highly reminiscent of the way in which classical Greek drama makes use of the chorus.

The dramatic effect of the *ta'ziyas* is astonishingly great. They are performed practically everywhere: public squares, courtyards in caravanserais and mosques, temporarily erected platforms, but also permanent special buildings called *takyes* are all appropriate places for the performances. As a rule the plays are given during the first ten days of the month of Muḥarram, the climax of the festivities being reached on the tenth day. This is the anniversary of the Karbalā massacre in the year 61/680. Owing to a shortage of actors the plays are sometimes spread out over two months. On other occasions such complications are resolved ingeniously and simply by having different performances in the town start at different times. Actors who have finished their part on one stage, hurry to the next on horseback.

The acquisition of stage properties and scenery presents no difficulties. The most important requisites are the *tābūt*, Ḥusayn's catafalque, which has openings so that lanterns can be placed inside it, and Ḥusayn's arms and banner. Fitting out the supernumeraries is a simple matter too, for all participants have their own trappings and trimmings. As for armour, and especially the horses and camels essential to add splendour to the show, any Shī'ite would feel it an honour to be asked for the loan of his beasts. Everybody is pleased to contribute the best he has on these occasions. It goes without saying that the wealthy pay the expenses of the performance as well as the actors' wages. Admittance is free and it is even the custom for the audience to be offered free refreshments. An integral part of the *ta'ziyas* are the street processions. Sometimes Ḥusayn's horse is led in the parade, sometimes it represents the bridal procession of Ḥasan's son Qāsim and Ḥusayn's daughter Fāṭima (II), but most important of all is the funeral cortège. In many cases the latter is held as sole ceremonial instead of the *ta'ziyas*, if for any reason the plays themselves cannot be performed.

The *ta'ziyas* reached their greatest height during the reign of the Qajars, i.e. the 19th and the first quarter of the 20th century, when Iran was at the lowest point of its decline. It was as if the people felt a need for real heroes and moral greatness, on the stage at least, and by taking part in the performances tried to escape to some extent from the depravity and corruption and impotence of contemporary life. From time to time the anonymous authors sacrificed veracity of representation to the idea. There are no intermediate shades or nuances, only light and dark, Shī'a and Sunna. Contrasts are so absolute that one need not be incredulous of reports of actors having played the part of one of the Prophet's enemies too convincingly and thereafter having been lynched by the fanatically enraged audience. On the other hand the actors took good care to soften the effect of their theatrical prowess, if only for the sake of their personal safety, for instance by weeping over one of their own victims together with the bereaved. For all that it would not have been wise for a Sunnite to take part in the

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ta'ziyas. A non-Moslem was more readily allowed to attend than someone known to be a Sunnite, for the latter were considered born opponents of the rightful claims of the Prophet's family – so fanatical were the emotions called forth by the memory of the martyrs' suffering.

As a rule the *ta'ziyas* consist of forty or fifty scenes, but the cycle is neither rounded off nor canonised, and there are several versions of the same numbers in existence. It is thought that even today new variants are being added. Of course the texts of all these scenes should be seen as paraphrases of earlier versions, and so it is not surprising that the folk-poets quote Koran verses and poems and even entire passages from the early poets, when it seems appropriate to include them in the story. Curses, prayers and complete sermons that later appear in the *ta'ziyas* already existed in the earliest literature of the Shī'ites. Many of the songs are also of considerable age; funeral choruses on the other hand are still being composed today.

Of course such an enormous number of scenes cannot be performed within the space of ten days. A selection therefore has to be made, and this is done in such a way that all the pieces appear in a sequence which forms a consistent cycle of scenes. It is not necessary here to discuss the contents of the various scenes[2], but the imagination of the versifiers and folk-poets was in no way restricted. Many scenes suffer to a greater or less extent from diffuseness, critical situations usually being made to last as long as possible. At the same time there are also a great many scenes which fulfil the highest dramatic demands, which fact is borne out by the tremendous effect they have on the audience.

The earliest and probably the original form of the *ta'ziyas* was the funeral sermon in honour of the martyrs of Karbalā. The contents of these sermons later inspired several works of poetry, really elegies (*marthiyyas*), of which the Shī'ites possess a great number. These lamentations, saturated with religious fanaticism as they are, have even penetrated into Sindhi literature.[3]

The extent of the influence of the Arabic historical romance *On Ḥusayn's Death and Mukhtār's Revenge*, that was attributed to one of the earliest Arabic historiographers, Abū Miḥnaf, remains a moot point.[4] Bearing in mind that this prose romance has retained its popularity until the present time, even among the Sunnites, it seems safe to assume that at least Persians of average education (and among such most of the *ta'ziya*-writers are to be found) were familiar with the content, if not with the romance itself. The various poets, however, did not simply write paraphrases or even translations, but they gave the subject an Iranian treatment, whereby many of the motifs were developed independently.

The dramatic form really evolved very slowly and gradually, in no way differently from other similar developments. The sermons and narratives based on the passion story of the Prophet's family, whether in rhetorical or poetical form, were composed and delivered in such a way that they incensed the people to loud emotional outbursts, the singing of refrains and wailing lamentations. In this way the solo recitals of the

preachers and narrators were interrupted and dramatised. It is very difficult to ascertain to what extent the subjects and epic shaping of the Shī'ite *ta'ziyas* were influenced by Arab or Persian legendary literature.[5] Some remote connection must at any rate be assumed. Later on processions were added to the original religious services on remembrance days. With the appearance of the *rauḍa-khvān*, these rudimentary dramatic scenes – which until then had stood loose from one another – became co-ordinated, for he served as director, playwright and narrator all in one. Gradually these productions ceased to be merely private enterprises. The people began to organise performances at their own expense so that also those who were not able to take an active part in the celebrations could at least fulfil their religious duties by attending the plays. The remarkable thing is that all these differing stages of development continued to exist quite happily side by side. It was only later that the scenes were put down in writing. These notes then served as stage directions and were universally put into use.[6]

All members of the Prophet's family appear in the *ta'ziyas*, although Ḥasan and Ḥusayn remain the principal heroes throughout the cycle. Nevertheless, other persons too came to play important parts, so that it is more accurate to speak of them as being heroes collectively. This merely enhances the attraction of the plays since other figures from Shī'ite hagiography now also obtain appropriate recognition.

B. *'UMAR-KUSHĀN*, RELIGIOUS PARODY, AND FARCE

If one thinks of the *ta'ziyas* as a kind of counterpart to the Christian Passion Plays, the parallel does not end here. In mediaeval Europe it was a common practice to intersperse the tragic episodes of the passion plays with comic interludes, which often became quite outrageous and profane. In the same manner there evolved among the Shī'ites a special type of religous parody, or more accurately farce, directed against the second caliph, 'Umar (634–644).

At first 'Umar was cursed at every opportunity, an exercise the Shī'ite Iranians enjoyed passionately and vociferously. At the same time 'Umar's murderer, the Persian artisan Abū Lūlū Firūz, was worshipped almost as a saint (he was given the honorary name of Shujā'u'd-dīn, i.e. Hero of the Faith). The fanatical Shī'ites were not in the least worried by the fact that he was no Moslem at all, but a Christian.

The *'Umar-kushān* day (also called *Qatl-i 'Umar*) is the ninth day of the month of *Rabī'u'l-avval*. The ceremonies and rituals connected with it were kept up for three days. The substance and purport of the parody *'Umar-kushān* as we know it today probably goes back no further than the very end of the 18th century.

The stage version of the *'Umar-kushān* contains practically nothing but ridicule and

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parody. Elegies are turned into songs of insult and malediction, the sermon is full of sneers, there is satire all the way, particularly during the procession. There is here certainly never any question of self-chastisement.

Like the *ta'ziyas*, the *'Umar-kushān* is intended to release passions in the audience, so that it is perhaps not unfortunate that since the beginning of the present century the *'Umar-kushān* in particular appears to have lost much of its popularity.[7]

C. FOLK-FARCES

In all probability the religious farce is no more than a relatively late development of very old traditions common to all peoples of the Near East. It is very likely, however, that there are certain connections between the mimes of ancient Greece and their oriental counterparts. The influence of the Greek mimes appears to have first become noticeable in the rather obscure times when the Diadoch realms were so strongly influenced by Hellenistic culture after the death of Alexander. Of course the gestures and facial expressions which form part of the mimes made them comprehensible even to an audience with a different language.

To a European spectator the Persian farce, *taqlīd*, must appear extremely primitive, in substance as well as plot. As a rule the subjects belong to everyday life. A favourite target for derision is the Iranian weakness for wine – a habit that has been frowned upon by religion for a long time but is as stubborn and ineradicable as ever, despite more than a thousand years of endeavour to stamp it out.

In their performances the Persian jesters expose the hypocrisy of Islamic sanctimoniousness and present life as it really is. They reveal publicly affairs which every one knows about, but anxiously keeps secret. It is here that one finds frequent glimpses of true art and clear evidence of a well-developed sense of reality. Whenever possible the spoken word is accompanied by singing, instrumental music and dancing. It need hardly be mentioned that all female parts are played by boys and men, the speeches and songs of course being rendered in falsetto.[8]

As we learn from Galunov[9], women too acted in performances at folk-theatres, though it is possible that the audience consisted of women only. This practice, however, seems to be on the decline.

As regards folk-farces from Tajikistan, it is quite sufficient to draw attention to the standard work published by Nizam Nurjanov. It also contains a selection of original texts with Russian translations of short farces and plays.[10]

D. IRANIAN BUFFOONS AND THEIR PRODUCTIONS[11]

Buffoons' shows are very closely related to folk-farces. Besides the many singers we know the Sasanian court employed, we can be quite sure that there were also large numbers of court jesters and jugglers.

After the victory of Islam there followed a long period during which there are no apparent traces of the old traditions, at any rate as far as we can tell. The early Islamic era with its outward asceticism and fanaticism was naturally opposed to all mundane affairs, and consequently negatively disposed towards dramatic performances.

With the decline of the centralised power of the caliphs, however, many things started to change. As soon as the feudal state began to disintegrate and the theocratic government grew weaker or disappeared completely, new courts formed around those in power and these became the centres of politics, culture and social life. It was now that jugglers and jesters made their appearance. They are already mentioned in the earliest Persian literature as *maskhara* or *maskhara-bāz*. They gave dramatic, acrobatic and dance performances.

The intrinsic dualism of Iran comes to light in dramatic folk-art also – on the one hand there are the pious *ta'ziyas*, deeply inspired by religion, and on the other the folk-farces with their personifications of sin and damnation. An actor playing the part of a saint in the *ta'ziyas* tries, through his performance, to approach this holy figure as closely as possible and this exercise earns him the right to a certain position of honour in the Moslem paradise. Farce actors, however, are predestined for hell and its tortures.

Actually the performances of the Persian *maskhara-bāz* have more in common with our circus productions than with theatrical performances as we know them in Europe. Persian jesters use no stage or theatrical appurtenances and they can put on a show anywhere and at any time.

During the performances amusing, usually satirical, couplets are sung and one is well advised not to get into the bad books of the travelling *lūṭī*. This intrepid vagabond fears not even the devil, let alone any local big-wig. Quite often it is the jesters who tackle the issues of the day in their own peculiar manner and give their racy comments on politics too.[12]

Favourable opportunities for the appearance of the *maskhara-bāz* are the various annual festivals, which are great occasions for masquerades and merry, even boisterous performances.[13]

In this connection it is interesting to recall what Nurjanov reports, namely that in Tajikistan too very varying customs are preserved at all kinds of festivities, and juggling shows are held with singing, music and dancing.[14] The texts of the farces, like other orally transmitted kinds of folk-literature, have no strictly fixed form. There

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are several variants of the same subject, the result of improvisation, whole episodes being sometimes extemporised. In all these farces there is a strong element of social criticism, consequently we find many political allusions, in fact in some cases the subject itself may be some political issue.

The buffoons were really extremely versatile artists. They could act, dance, sing and play musical instruments, while their parodies and imitations were often highly realistic. A peculiar feature of their performances was that the audience was often drawn into the action.[15] It seems likely that much of the material found among the Tajiks is rather older than parallel developments in western Iran.[16]

E. SHADOW PLAYS

All the types of dramatic folk-poetry we have discussed so far, though they differ widely in many respects, have one thing in common – the characters are always portrayed by living persons. Equally popular, however, has always been the puppet theatre in its various forms. Only in recent years has there been a certain degree of competition from the cinema.

It is necessary to distinguish here between the true puppet theatre and the shadow theatre. The puppets are really an inheritance from ancient Greece and Rome, they are plastic and substantial. The shadow theatre, the favourite of the East, on the other hand, operates with flat figures and possesses an unreal, dreamlike character. Most likely it is one of the many acquisitions which came with the Mongol invasion from China and were brought far to the West. Of course the rotating magic lantern had already been known for a considerable time at least to a few people (*fānūs-i khayāl*). As ʿOmar Khayyām points out, the lantern was rotated by hot air generated by the light inside the lantern. The sides bore the images of various characters, the good ones in the form of people, the wicked in the form of devils. In Iran these images already had a real Iranian appearance.

If we try to explain how these shadow theatres have become so enormously widespread, we shall probably find that it is their very dream-like quality and their ability to create an illusion that attracts the Orientals so strongly. By clever manipulation a good performer can appear to control all natural forces and laws, particularly gravity, and he can turn palpable reality into a mere phantom.

Formerly it was absolutely essential to come to terms with certain of the dogmatic demands of Islam. For instance, it was undesirable to portray living creatures. This difficulty, however, was overcome by the manufacturers of the flat figures in an unexpected and most ingenious way. They punched holes in the figures through which rods could be stuck for moving them, and at the same time these holes, which usually went through

the stomach, made it clear that the figures could not possibly be alive. In this way the strict rules of religion were obeyed.

The principal character in the shadow plays is 'Kachal pahlavān'. Much can be learnt merely from the different interpretations of this name. The old word *pahlavān* originally meant 'hero', but nowadays the meaning has weakened to 'artist' or 'athlete'. The second component, *kachal*, means 'bald head', 'scurfy head' or 'the scabrous one'. Kachal pahlavān has this bald-headedness in common with the Turkish 'Karagöz' and the Greek 'mimos'. Otherwise each of these related figures mirrors the different characteristics of its own nationality. Pahlavān kachal is actually closer to the Turkish 'Hajīavād'. Chodzko describes him aptly and briefly thus: "Kachal pahlavan is a hypocrite, he can read and write and is well-educated, he is even a poet. Most of all he likes to fool the *mullās* and make them look ridiculous, and he pays court to the ladies and sometimes even to the young boys."

It is very possible that the gipsies were at least partially responsible for the spreading of the puppet theatres, and especially the shadow theatres. Karagöz, after all, was a gipsy figure and even greeted people in the gipsy language.

It was however the religion of Islam that most influenced the shadow theatre and determined its present character. If we further reflect how much Islam owes to the Iranian temperament and Iranian culture, it appears only logical that the shadow plays must have preserved just as much that is essentially Iranian.

According to Islamic doctrine there is little man can do to influence his destiny, and this idea is widely upheld in the shadow plays. In appropriate ways and with the use of suitable dramatic devices they try to illustrate this basic law. To a Moslem the solving of personal ethical problems means little and makes no sense. He feels too much dependent on the will of Allah, and in following Allah's will he seeks redemption for his sins.

Other subjects too found their way into the shadow theatre. Sometimes folk-tales about *dēvs* provide the necessary variation in subject-matter – it goes without saying that the *dēvs* are always beaten by Kachal pahlavān. Very often the subjects of the shadow plays are taken from romantic or humorous tales and anecdotes. Whatever their source they are however always connected with folk-literature. Besides mythological subjects and motifs[17] we also find many of a heroic nature.

The classical subject of Farhād and Shīrīn, for example, occurs quite often, not of course in its literary form but in one derived from folk-tradition. The well-known prose folk-book about Ṭāhir and Zuhra has been used in the same way, although it has become badly distorted and corrupted. Parodies and imitations of speech and person (the technical term is *taqlīd*) have become as much a standard practice in the shadow plays as music, which is an important and essential part of them. The scripts of the shadow plays often remind us of librettos for musical plays.

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F. GLOVE PUPPET THEATRES

Glove puppet shows are generally given during the day-time. The puppets are manipulated in the well-known way from below – they are worn like gloves and the head and arms are moved by the fingers. This makes it possible to perform without difficulty in daylight, when the gay colours of the puppets show up to their best advantage.

As early as the 15th century A.D. there were two kinds of puppet theatres in Iran – glove puppets and marionettes or string puppets, which we shall discuss next. The Iranian puppet theatre as a whole has a regrettable preference for coarse, crude and sometimes really vulgar modes of expression. Not infrequently we find blatant obscenities in some of the plays.

A glove puppet show is operated by two people. The proprietor stands outside the booth and takes part in the dialogue or directly in the action, while his assistant (*shāgird*) sits inside the booth and speaks the different parts. Both puppet players extemporise their lines, and they are often jugglers or professional story-tellers and reciters at the same time. Both these skills are of great service to a puppet player. The stage usually consists of a fairly small booth made out of four pieces of material attached to four poles (*khayma*).

The puppets (*ṣūrat*) are generally made by the owner himself. The head and neck are carved out of wood or modelled in *papier mâché*. A puppet is worn on each hand for performance. The thumb goes into one of the sleeves, the first and middle fingers into the head and the fourth and little fingers into the other sleeve. The man in the booth operates the puppets and speaks their parts, though usually not 'straight' but through a kind of decoy-trumpet (*sūt, sūtak*) which he holds between his lips.

Proprietors of puppet shows are often invited to give private performances in wealthy houses. Here they do not feel the restrictions and interferences of censorship. The way in which puppet players collect their money, particularly at public performances, is interesting, for in order to make a success of it they have to manage it with great cunning and tact. At the beginning of the show and several times during the course of it they try to get the audience into the proper spirit by reminding them frequently of ʿAlī and how favourably he regards generosity. All this is done in very carefully chosen phrases. Were they to leave the collection until after the performance, there is no doubt that the result would be very poor.[18]

G. MARIONETTE THEATRES

The Persian designation *khayma shab bāzī* (i.e. evening booth show) indicates that the marionette shows are a form of dramatic art that is almost entirely confined to the

evening hours and artificial light. The chief reason for this is that the strings that control the puppets are then less visible to the spectators.

The stage is arranged in the same way as for glove puppets, except that the actual platform is at ground level. A set of marionettes may number as many as sixty or eighty puppets. The properties and costumes follow current trends. In recent times, for instance, a toy motor-car has become one of the stage properties.

Quite often we find a small 'orchestra', consisting of a drummer (*ḍarb-gīr*), a fiddler (*kamāncha-kash*) and a castanet-player taking part in the performance.

Like the glove puppet shows, the marionette theatre is operated by two people. One of them stands in the booth and manipulates the puppets – a trumpet being used here too. The second man sits in front of the stall, beats a small cup-shaped drum (*dumbak*) and speaks the different parts, while he too often gets involved in the play himself.

The romances (*taṣnīf*)[19], which are sung by both puppet players during the show, vary a great deal. They may be folk-songs, historical *taṣnīfs*, or topical songs. The *taṣnīfs*, however, are not performed in their entirety, generally only their opening verses being given. Large portions of the text are improvised, and here again we come across many vulgarities and obscenities. The skill displayed by Persian marionette players during their shows in the way of dancing and acrobatics is remarkable and wins well-deserved praise from the audience. This can also be said of the artistic standard of their productions.

Marionette players too are often invited by the well-to-do to give performances in their homes. Especially in these marionette shows there is a strong ethnographic element: dances and processions connected with funerals or weddings are staged, and we also find performances of the rites appropriate to a birth, bastinadoes, etc. Less conspicuous here are the many anachronisms and modernisations, but equally important the more or less successful and subtle attempts to wheedle money out of the audience. It is collected under many pretexts: sometimes a cup of tea has to be provided for the driver of the car, otherwise he will remain stuck on the stage; another time it is to buy swaddling-bands for a new-born marionette baby. Because they are so closely connected with everyday life and the happenings are presented in such a realistic way, marionette theatres have become so popular that the shadow plays have to some extent disappeared into the background.[20]

H. MODERN DRAMA AND ITS CONNECTIONS WITH FOLK-LITERATURE

The fundamental difference between modern Tajik and Persian polite literature is clearly to be seen in dramatic literature.

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What strikes one about the modern Persian theatre is that the amateur theatrical tradition is being abandoned only very slowly. Professional or even semi-professional enterprises are rare. The actors belong to spontaneously assembled groups and during the day-time they carry out their ordinary occupations, mostly as artisans, small shop-keepers or town-porters. They meet together in the evenings and play before a limited number of spectators, while they are often hired to perform in private houses. The chief person is the producer of the play, but the company of actors is constantly changing. Occasionally, however, a group may stay together for a longer period and put on performances in a particular part of the country, travelling from one place to another. Their books of words are more like scenarios or directions for the course of the plot, for the actors are allowed to improvise the details of the play, just as in the Italian *commedia dell'arte*. But of course this is no new development – the same occurs in the *ta'ziyas*.[21]

Tajik dramatic art is certainly more advanced. The once casually formed groups of amateur actors have become regular permanent theatres with professional artists, their own dramaturgy and their own acting schedule. This development was stimulated not only by European example but also by notable Tajik traditions.[22] But it is principally on account of its repertory and its strong connections with Tajik folk-literature that the modern Tajik theatre differs from the Persian. Mīrsayyid Mīrshakar, for example, dramatised the famous legend of *The Golden Qishlāq*, and Tursūnzāda, together with Dihātī, wrote in 1936 a musical drama in verse after Niẓāmī's *Khusrau and Shīrīn*, with the same title. These two authors again collaborated to write the libretto for the first national Tajik opera, *The Rising of the Vāsi'*, dealing with the popular revolt of 1885. In 1933 a play of this name had already been written by Sayyidsulṭān Sayyidmuradov.[23]

In marked contrast to this highly independent trend in Tajikistan is the development of Persian dramatic literature, the reason being that it is so largely derivative. Here the models are always foreign, whether one thinks of Fatḥ 'Alī Ākhundzāda (*Monsieur Jourdain*, etc. – in this case translations from the Azerbayjanian) or of European models. Initially it was mostly French works that were taken as models, Molière in particular. The Persian translators, however, had their own strange methods – they brought the events in the originals up to date and generally also adapted names and certain situations to Persian conditions. As a result these translations are really more like paraphrases or variations on a well-known theme. Through the intervention of its Persian editor such a play then becomes truly Persian in character.[24]

NOTES

1. Cf. Ethé, 'Das persische Passionsspiel', in *Morgenländische Studien* (Leipzig 1870), 174–194; Baumgartner, I, 577–584; Horn, *Pers. Lit.*, 201–212; recently published comprehensive catalogue of

ta'ziyas: Rossi–Bombaci, *Elenco di drammi religiosi persiani* (cf. Bibl.) is indispensable for any research in the domain of religious drama in Iran.

2. Cf. Horn, *Pers. Lit.*, 201–212; Chodzko, 'Théatre persan', in *Choix de téaziés* (Paris 1878); Baumgartner, *op. cit.*, I, 578–581; see also Rossi–Bombaci, *Elenco.*

3. Baumgartner, *op.cit.*, II, 289.

4. Baumgartner, *op. cit.*, I, 408 *et seq.*; II, 289; Wüstenfeld, *Der Tod des Husejn b. Ali und die Rache. Ein hist. Roman aus dem Arabischen* (S. B. der G. der W., Berlin, dated 3.8.1882 and 6.1.1883).

5. Cf. Paret, *op. cit.*, principally p. IV.

6. Litten–Rosen, *Das Drama in Persien*, III–XVII; Massé, *Croyances*, 120–136.

7. Krïmskïy, *Pers'kïy teatr*, 74–80.

8. Horovitz, *Spuren griechischer Mimen im Orient*, 12; Bertel's, *Persidskiy teatr*, 81, 82.

9. Galunov, *Nar. teatr Irana*, 69–74.

10. Nurdzhanov, *Tadzh. nar. teatr*, 197–326.

11. Cf. Galunov, *Nar. teatr. Irana*, 73–74.

12. Bertel's, *Persidkiy teatr*, II, 12, 63–65.

13. Massé, *Croyances*, 146 *et seq.*

14. Cf. Nurdzhanov, *Tadzhikskiy narodnïy teatr*, principally 105–172.

15. Nurdzhanov, *Istoki nar. teatra u Tadzhikov*, 103 *et seq.*; see also his *Tadzhikskiy nar. teatr*, and other works of the same author.

16. Cf. also Galunov, *Nar. teatr Irana*, 55–83; see also Menzel, *Meddâḥ..., passim.*

17. Cf. Jacob, *Geschichte des Schattentheaters*, 10, 16, 31, 43, 44, 109, 132, 133, 137.

18. Galunov, *Pakhlavān-Kachal'*, 26–30.

19. A very representative collection was recently published under the title *Persidskie tesnifï* (M. 1964).

20. Galunov, *Kheyme shab-bāzī*, 1–3.

21. Chaykin, *Kr. ocherki noveyshey persid. liter.*, 134–137; cf. *Sovremennïy Iran, spravochnik* (M. 1957), 460–464.

22. Nurdzhanov, *Istoki*, 108; cf. also *Materialï k istorii zarozhdeniya tadzh. teatra, passim.*

23. *Sov. pisateli Tadzhikistana*, 12, 38, 52, 75, 93.

24. Bertel's, *Persid. teatr*, 72, 80–82.

IX. VERSE FORMS OF FOLK-LITERATURE

A. FOLK-QUATRAINS

One may safely say of Persian polite literature that nearly all major works are composed in verse, and that only very recently does this phenomenon appear to be undergoing a change. In Iranian folk-literature, on the other hand, the reverse is true – most types are composed and transmitted in prose, while a smaller proportion is in verse.

Among the various genres of rhythmical poetry the quatrain (*rubā'ī*) genuinely has its roots among the people. Each verse is usually made up of eleven syllables, though occasionally one finds twelve or fourteen. Not until later was the metric system of polite literature imposed upon the folk-quatrains (most common is the incomplete eleven-syllable *hazaj*). It is interesting to examine how these quatrains were designated by the people. Those written in dialect, in particular, are called *fahlaviyyāt* or *pahlaviyyāt*. It is significant that the Gīlakīs also give this name to their songs, which consist of several quatrains. Of course there are other names as well – *chōrbaytī*, *dūbaytī*, *sōrbūnī* (songs of the camel-drivers). In the province of Fars we find the names *shärve*, *shärbe*, *shälve*, and *shälvī*.

Quatrains are always recited in a monotonous and long drawn-out kind of chant which even by the Persian themselves is described as 'plaintive' and 'wailing' (*Āvāz-i mūya*, *Āvāz-i ḥazīn*). It is possible that the name used in the Fars dialects – *shärve* etc. – really refers to the way of singing and that this meaning has been forgotten elsewhere.

The quatrains do not always stand on their own but are sometimes incorporated into romances (*taṣnīf*), in which case both the romance and the quatrain continue to be recited in their own manner. The *shärve* is often given a refrain of one or two words. The rhyme pattern of the folk-quatrains is the same as that in literary poetry

(*aaba*). So-called singing quatrains (*rubā'ī-i tarāna* with rhyme pattern *aaaa*) do not occur very often, but the rhyme formula *aabb* appears fairly frequently. The latter type of quatrain may easily be made up into *ghazals* and *mathnavīs*.[1]

B. LYRIC AND EPIC FOLK-SONGS

Chares of Mytilene[2] already mentioned that at the time of Alexander the Great the Persians sang romances such as the one on *Zariadres and Odatis*. The famous Pahlavi work *Ayātkār-i Zarērān* may originally have developed out of this romance. Benveniste is of the opinion that it first existed in verse form and that the pattern later became syllabic, i.e. syllable-counting.[3] Chares' observation is of the greatest importance since it proves that very early on there were lyric as well as epic folk-songs in Iran.

Folk-songs accompany the Iranian from the cradle to the grave. Lullabies are the first thing a child hears. In many respects the Iranian lullabies remind us of the Slavonic, partly on account of their refrains. In structure the lullabies are really *mathnavīs*, that is a series of rhymed couplets (*aa bb cc*, etc.), and strictly speaking an intermediary form between prose and poetry. The verses are syllabic, although sometimes again quantitative. Here too *hazaj* makes an appearance, but its popular modifications are relatively rare. Developments that remind us of polite literary forms give rise to the suspicion that there may have been a reciprocal – though maybe only partial – influence between the latter and folk-forms.

A study of the contents of the various lullabies is in many ways rewarding. As a rule these folk-songs give a very good picture of the true family relationships, social conditions and practical philosophy of the people (to a less extent of the ruling classes). Most lullabies were composed for a son, only rarely for a daughter, for to have a son was a blessing, to have several led to fame. In certain circumstances it was even considered a misfortune for a woman to have a daughter – one daughter was enough in any case.

The mother appeals to the saints to protect her child, 'Alī being most often invoked. Like mothers of all other nationalities, the Iranian woman likes to express tenderness in her song, for a lullaby is really a dialogue between mother and child. If the child misbehaves, however, the mother sometimes threatens or curses him.

We find a considerable difference between the lullabies sung by mothers leading a stationary life and those of nomadic women. The nomadic Bakhtiyaris consider the tribe to be of greater importance than the individual, a woman stands on an equal footing with the men of the tribe, so that a mother raises her child not for herself only but for the whole community. For all that, the lullabies bear witness to everything that is most dear to women as well as to their cares and worries. In these songs they

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express their private thoughts and the joys and griefs of family life. It lies in the nature of things that the wife of the settled Persians has a much narrower outlook. Whereas a Bakhtiyari wife may sometimes complain about the trouble caused by guests, though also referring in her song to the stories she has enjoyed hearing in their company, the Persian woman languishes in loneliness since her men-folk tend to spend a large part of the year away from home to earn their living. Bakhtiyari women do not know the feeling of loneliness, and if they refer to an absence due to a journey or visit, there is no question of nostalgia because such partings are never for long. The Bakhtiyari lullabies are rich in motifs, subjects and inspiration – nature in its different seasons is described and so are the wanderings of the tribe, attacks by the enemy and the punishment of the latter. As a rule the story is told in a fairly impersonal manner. Persian women, on the other hand, complain mainly about domestic troubles and personal cares. If a Bakhtiyari woman occasionally mentions hard times this should not be taken as a personal utterance, but rather as an expression of regret for a misfortune that has befallen the whole tribe. Individual unhappiness is expressed only when a Bakhtiyari woman is unable to join her tribe on its journeyings. The total impression of the position of women obtained from the lullabies is that the Bakhtiyari wives have an incomparably better life and enjoy a relative measure of freedom and respect, in strong contrast to the sad lot of the women of the sedentary Persians, whose existence is hard and who are kept in a constant state of subjugation. The same is true of the mainly Central Asian Jewish women (the Central Asian and Persian Jews speak an extremely archaic Iranian dialect).[4]

Besides these lullabies, which are called *lālā'ī* and are popular everywhere, whether it be among dialect-speaking tribes who are mainly nomadic, or among the settled townspeople who speak the vulgar colloquial language known as *Bāzārī*[5], the folk-lyrics include a great number of love-songs. These may be in the form of *ghazals* or *qaṣīdas*. Structurally the love-songs are really identical with the lullabies, they differ only in subject-matter and content. Here too we find a typical characteristic of folk-tradition, namely that the verses are basically syllabic instead of quantitative[6], although there are also numerous regional variations. The number of syllables vacillates between seven and fifteen, while regular rhyme is sometimes represented merely by assonance. Be that as it may, an important factor appears to be the extent to which the folk-poet stood under the influence of polite poetry or allowed this influence to affect his work.

We can learn quite a lot from a short investigation into the folk-literature composed in verse-form by the Iranian tribes in Pamir. Some remarkable things come to light here, and since until recently the Pamir districts have been separated from other centres of Iranian culture, it is not at all impossible that peculiarities of folk-tradition that seem to have survived only here, have done so in a form which in other places has long since had to give way to the influence of polite literature.[7]

The versified folk-literature of the Shughnanians can be divided into the following

types: the *dargīlīk* (songs of nostalgia) and its variants, though only as regards subject-matter, the *lālāīk* (lullaby) and the *shoīrä* (cf. Persian *shā'irī*, here however in the meaning of 'improvisation'). Whereas the *dargīlīk* and the *lālāīk* have a very rigid structural pattern, the *shoīrä* is rather a poem composed for a particular occasion and is more flexible in respect of poetic rules. There is notably a strongly marked contrast between the *shoīrä* and Persian or Tajik poetry (literary poetry and therefore sometimes referred to as *kitōb*). Persian or Tajik poems are here known as *sōz*, instead of the more familiar *bayt*.

In Shughnanian versified folk-literature the structural units are strophes rather than whole songs. Strophes may be joined together as required, so that new songs can be composed by combining them in different ways. Only thus can it be explained how several strophes re-appear in more than one poem. One might call them 'wandering strophes'. The rhymes are usually very pure, and the refrains never develop the ideas in the poem itself. A Chaghatay technical term for refrain is *qōshiq* ('connected').

As we have already said, there is also a formal difference between the *dargīlīk* and the *shoīrä*. A *shoīrä* is really composed of a number of quatrains (*chorbait*). The first three verses rhyme with one another, the fourth is the refrain and generally unrelated to the rhyme pattern. Each verse of a *shoīrä* consists of seven syllables without a caesura, but there are exceptions, although syllables are more often added to than substracted from the usual number. The refrain is sometimes in Persian. The subjects of the *shoīrä* vary a great deal. Sometimes they are love-songs, sometimes they are composed in praise of the beauty of some person, or they describe battle-scenes – even very recent ones – deplore social abuses or make fun of some locally known situation. It is a favourite form for poems written for special occasions or celebrations.

The *dargīlīks*, on the other hand, are of a more private nature. They are particularly suited to descriptions of intimate experiences or desires and are always composed in dialect. They are addressed to mothers or sweethearts by their sons or lovers, but sometimes also vice versa. They are not used at family celebrations, for they invariably possess a touch of melancholy and nostalgia. They consist of two rhyming four-footed verses, each of eight syllables, and one refrain that is not counted as part of the strophe. For this reason the latter is called *dubayt*. Each verse has a caesura after the fourth syllable, not only rhythmically but also semantically. Five- or three-footed verses are rare. The refrain consists of twice four syllables (each being one semi-verse) and the two halves, which are separated by two eight-syllable verses, rhyme with one another. The rhyme pattern thus becomes *aarbbr*. This symmetry is structural as well as semantic. As has been pointed out already, the *lālāīks* are really a special form of *dargīlīk*. The Pamir love-songs have a further peculiarity that is very interesting and worth noting – they pay tribute exclusively to married women. It is not permitted and thus impossible to approach an unmarried girl, but there is no objection to a relationship with the wife of another man. Perhaps this is an echo of ancient family relationships from pre-Islamic times.

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As regards the music, it is curious that all *dargīlīks* are sung to the same melody, whereas for the *shoīräs* there are different ones. There are also of course intermediate forms between the two main types.[8]

Dargīlīks can be comparatively long; Skjöld for instance mentions one consisting of sixteen times two-and-a-half verses. The pairs of long verses rhyme with each other, while the refrains rhyme throughout the poem. This does not mean of course that there are no *ghazals* in the versified folk-literature of the Pamir Iranians.[9]

Tajik folk-songs are related to the *dargīlīks* of the Pamir Iranians, at least as far as their content is concerned. They are called *gharībī*[10] – 'songs from abroad' – and are moving expressions of the Tajiks' nostalgia for their home country from which they had been driven through sheer lack of a means of subsistence. Moreover the earlier folk-songs of the Tajiks give vent to an unconcealed opposition and animosity towards their oppressors. Folk-literature alone escaped the influence of the all-powerful upper class in the days before the Revolution. Social themes play an important part even in the love-songs and *ghazals*. Occasionally, for instance, the futility and utter hopelessness of a love affair between two people of unequal social classes have inspired really heart-breaking poems.[11] Modern Tajik folk-songs are entirely different in character. Many famous poets of the 'literary' school now write in such a 'folk' manner that their poems often become folk-songs surprisingly rapidly. We should mention here at least Sayyid-'Alī Valīzāda, Mīrsayyid Mīrshakar, Bāqī Raḥīmzāda, and Muḥīddīn Hasanovv Farḥat.[12]

It would be strange indeed if in a nation with a talent for epics like the Iranians, the epic element were to be missing from the folk-songs. Their epic folk-songs, however, are quite separate from the epics in polite and folk-literature. This emerges clearly from the material collected by Chodzko in his time. He also discovered that the Gilanians call poems written in their own dialect *pahlaviyyāt*, and those in Persian *taṣnīf*.[13]

For the sake of completeness it may be added that short folk-poems of an epic character – we have already discussed their contents – are usually in the form of *mathnavīs*. Rather than give a complete list, it will suffice to mention the Kurdic *dāstān*, *Mame and Aishe*[14], and the Balūchi texts of Dames.[15]

Afghan versified folk-literature on the whole resembles the average Iranian type. As far as it is possible to judge from the material supplied by Darmesteter, there appears to be a fairly strong influence from Persian polite poetry. The favourite form is *miṣra'*, and not *chahārbayt*, which is to be found mainly in ballads. It is curious to note that the Afghans recognise two different categories of poets. The first, called *shā'ir*, composers of literary poetry, are men of culture and have a distinguished position in high society. Although they rate so much higher than the folk-poets (*ḍum*) in a social sense, their popularity and influence with the common people is very small. The folk-poets (*ḍum*) on the other hand, have a great deal of authority because of their close ties with the people. They pay due attention to all current events in their

songs. Reciprocal plagiarism is indulged in frequently, but is not taken very seriously. An interesting institution are the schools for folk-singers, where a group of young men gather around an experienced and famous *ḍum*. The apprenticeship is long[16], for the repertory of an Afghan folk-poet includes every current form of folk-literature, from love-songs to rebel songs.

C. FOLK-COUPLETS, COUNTING-OUT AND NURSERY RHYMES

Folk-poetry is an integral part of all varieties of dramatic art, either as the form chosen for particular passages or inserted in a prose text. Very often verse is used by jugglers and theatre proprietors when soliciting their reward from the audience and also for the counting-out of athletes. Apart from this, a few verses are frequently included in folk-tales which are themselves mainly in prose.

By far the most important and most common, however, are the lesser forms of folk-poetry like children's games or the games parents play with their children. It is significant that in these cases verse is preferred to prose, whereas in folk-literature the reverse is usually the case. The reason is of course that verse is more easily memorised, and further that there is less scope for improvisation, which is such an important factor in other types of folk-literature. Naturally each game requires a fixed shape and story, and it makes no difference whether it is a counting-out game, whether fixed questions are involved, or whether the particular verses are recited or sung to a special tune.

Of course we must not expect to find great artistic masterpieces among this kind of folk-poem. A more detailed discussion of the subject is provided by the French orientalist Massé.[17]

NOTES

1. Romaskevich, *Persid. nar. chetverostishiya*, 4–6; Eberman, *Persi sredi arab. poetov epokhi Omeyadov*, 119; Bertel's, *Persid. poeziya v Bukhare X veka*, 33; *Chetverostishiya, Iz tadzh. nar. liriki* (St. 1957); *Fol'klori tojik* (St. 1957).
2. Cf. *Griechische Märchen*, 143–144.
3. Massé, *Firdousi*, 23, 40.
4. Zhukovskiy, *Koltbel'nïye pesni, passim*; Lozovskaya, *Mat' i dit'ya u sredneaziatskikh yevreyev*, 206, 207.

5. Massé, *Croyances*, 491, 492, 494, 496; cf. also Kégl, *A persza népdal* (see Bibl.!).
6. Massé, *Croyances*, 491, 492; Minorsky, *Oriental Studies in the USSR*, 94; Miller, *O dialekte goroda Shustera*, 76.
7. Cf. also Lentz, *Auf dem Dach der Welt*, 139–142, 200–204 *et passim* this book contains a wealth of very useful information on ethnography and folklore; Lentz, *Pamir-Dialekte*, 57–67.
8. Lentz, *Auf dem Dach der Welt*, 200–204.
9. Skjöld, *Pamirsprachen*, 126–129.
10. Cf. *Fol'klori tojik*, 178–209.
11. *Nar. poeziya Tadzhikistana*, 4, 5; *Fol'klori tojik*, 164–397.
12. *Sov. pisateli Tadzhikistana*, 48, 75, 88, 108; *Fol'klori tojik*, 18–158.
13. Cf. Chodzko, *Specimens*, 418 *et seq.*, texts Nos. I, II, XLIII, XLVI, see also p. 474; cf. also *Persidskiye tesnifi* (M. 1964).
14. Kurdoyev–Tsukerman, *Kurdskiye teksti*, 30–46; cf. also Nikitine, *Les Kurdes*, 259–281.
15. Dames, *Sketch*, 133–160.
16. Darmesteter, *Afghan Life in Afghan Songs*, 3; Darmesteter, *Chants populaires des Afghans*, CXCI, CXCIII, CXCIV; contemporary Afghan folk-poetry published by Lebedev, 'Afganskaya poeziya', in *Voprosi yaz. i liter. stran Vostoka*, pod red. Y. V. Rozhdestvenskogo (M. 1958), 258–273; Dvoryankov, N. A., 'Malang Dzhan – nar. poet Afganistana', *KSIA*, XXXVII (M. 1960), 60–75; cf. also Belyayev, V., *Afganskaya narodnaya muzika* (M. 1960); Gerasimova, A.–Girs, G., *Literatura Afganistana* (M. 1963), 10–25; perhaps the Afghan *ḍums* are in some way connected with the gipsies in NW-India and Pakistan; similar schools also exist elsewhere, e.g. in Kurdistan, cf. Nikitine, *Les Kurdes*, 273–274.
17. Massé, *Croyances*, 419–438; cf. also Semenov, A.A., 'Detskie pozdravitel'niye stishki v bukharskikh maktabakh', *Izv. Tadzh. AN*, 10–11 (St. 1956).

X. RIDDLES AND PROVERBS

The folk-literature of an oriental people like the Iranians would be unimaginable without riddles and proverbs. It is of prime importance for each utterance or proposition to be couched in elegant and ingenious, even rhetorical terms, and this just about sums up all that is to be said about these last two categories. The classical Italian adage, *si non è vero, è ben trovato,* could not be more appropriate.

Nevertheless, what has just been said cannot be taken without certain reservations, for it is difficult to be quite sure about what is really folk-literature and what has already been adapted to the rules of polite literature, or should be seen as a variation on a popular theme. Nowhere does the final form in which a particular thought is expressed depend so much on the poet – whether he be known or anonymous – as in the case of proverbs (*Gulistān!*). We have to rely on several collections falling into the category of polite literature, and even when European collectors believe to have struck a virgin source of folk-literature one cannot be certain beforehand that there has not been a secondary influence from written collections or at least from the sermons of a local *mullā*.

Iranian polite literature is almost unthinkable without proverbs. In each work at least one maxim or dictum must be included somewhere, and this may itself be a remnant of a proverb. The situation is summed up very well in the following comparison: just as classical prose and even scholarly treatises are rarely without a few quotations from the great poets, the latter in their turn are continously aided and guided by proverbs, riddles and allusions in their search for picturesque and elegant ways of expression.

It is not necessary to say anything more about the important part played both in the polite literature and the folk-literature of the Iranians by these two types of folklore. Like folk-tales, anecdotes and short stories, the riddles and proverbs are favourite building materials for more elaborate polite and folk-literature. Even in cultural epics and in theological writings, Islamic as well as pre-Islamic, there are clear instances of their use.

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Even in the *Shāh-nāma* we find riddle-episodes. The most important is the episode from the story of Zāl and Rūdāba, in which Zāl has to answer six riddles put to him by the magi at the court of Mihrāb, whose daughter Rūdāba he wishes to marry.[1] It is worth noting that the riddles of the magi inspired Gozzi and Schiller, at any rate in a remote way, to create a similar situation in *Turandot*.[2] The collecting and interpreting of Iranian proverbs has been the work mainly of European orientalists, although native scholars have now started to make contributions. A good deal has moreover been published in India, and there are a number of Persian manuscripts. There is no doubt, however, that work in this field is most advanced in modern Turkey, though this is no reason to believe that Iran is less rich in proverbs than the latter country. Of course none of this implies that the Persians and their poets did not value proverbs or that they disdained them. On the contrary, as early as the 10th century A.D. there was a certain Abū'l Faḍl Sukkarī from Merv, who translated Persian proverbs into Arabic. Niẓāmī, too, was fond of using them and a few centuries later we find Sā'ib, an important poet who lived in the 17th century, using proverbs in his poems. One has to keep in mind that European influences penetrated here considerably later than in Turkey, which also explains why the methods and precepts of European folklore study have only in recent times had any effect in Iran. If one remembers the large number of other more urgent questions that still remain to be studied, it is easy to see why scholars have not as yet turned their attention to minor problems such as that of proverb investigation.

On account of their brevity Iranian proverbs can hardly be expected to record the Iranian practical philosophy of everyday life so extensively as does, for instance, the *Thousand and One Nights*. Nevertheless they are a good source of information on the moral concepts of the common Iranian. The fatalism so characteristic of them goes back to pre-Islamic ideology. Another interesting feature is the vast utilitarian outlook expressed in the proverbs, and the fact that they touch but superficially on the causes of concrete phenomena, never enquiring too deeply. Nonetheless, they often emphasise how important it is to control one's passions and to be just, moderate and unselfish. A man should be courageous, and also in a wider sense, self-denying and loyal to the accepted laws; also generous, although prodigality is heavily condemned.[3] It all adds up to that typical folk-wisdom which perfectly echoes the basic morals of fables and most folk-tales. This concordance is, of course, no coincidence but an organic and logical outcome of a long evolution.[4]

Horten rightly points out[5] that all collections of proverbs compiled and published so far are really no more than an assembling of material. A truly scientific investigation has yet to be made, and as things stand at the moment this is a difficult and even premature task. First it will be necessary to explore the cultural, social and economic situation of the society in question, and only on this basis will it be possible to attempt a classification.

An investigation along these lines would provide a valuable contribution to our

knowledge of the practical philosophy of the peoples of the East, and at the same time give us an insight into the extent to which this branch of Islamic culture is indebted to Iranian sources and influences.

As to an examination and collection of the proverbs of other Iranian tribes, as yet only a start has been made. Unless real progress in this field is made, however, any study of proverbs based solely on Persian examples – which are generally strongly influenced by polite literature and have little to do with folk-literature – will be incomplete and premature.[6]

Our knowledge of Iranian proverbs is inadequate. No change in this state of affairs has been effected by the recently published large Russian anthology, though it contains a respectable proportion of Iranian proverbs (more than 2100).[7] Comparative research has a limited number of records at its disposal and these are of varying quality; wide areas of Iranian linguistic territory remain until now unexplored.[8] Unique as regards aims and content is the research into the application and use of Tajik proverbs to be found in the works of Sadriddin Aĭnī.[9]

Research on Iranian proverbs would have to include the following activities: (1) collection and publication of proverbs from dialectal records and the provision of literal translations; (2) study of the collected proverbs by means of accurate and thorough analyses from the standpoints of comparative research into their literary, historical, ethnographical and cultural values; (3) determination of genetical connections and affiliations of individual wordings; and finally (4) comparative juxtaposition with European proverbs. When studying wider contexts of proverbs it is important that the quality of any translation should be the best possible. Finally it will be important to find out whether proverbs have served to provide story-tellers with material on which to base their anecdotes and jokes.[10]

NOTES

1. Cf. Kowalski, *Studia*, I, 148–221; II, 16–17.

2. Cf. Schack, *Heldensagen des Firdousi*, I, 'Einleitung', 88; nevertheless not directly, the corresponding tale from *Mille et un jours* being intermediary; cf. also Niẓāmī, *Haft payikar* (ed. Ritter–Rypka), the tale of the Russian princess, 178 *et seq.*; see also Rypka, 'Les sept princesses de Niẓāmī', in *L'âme de l'Iran* (Paris 1951), 99–125; for the Tajik riddles and folk-tales with riddles as subjects see Chistonho (v. Bibl!).

3. Cf. Horten, *Philosophie des Islam*, 282, 283, 368, 369, note 248.

4. Carra de Vaux, *Les penseurs de l'Islam*, 337.

5. Horten, *Philosophie des Islam*, 282–285.

6. A Persian collection of great importance was published by 'Alī Akbar Dihkhudā, *Kitāb-i amthāl u ḥikam* I–IV (Tehran 1310).

7. *Poslovitsť i pogovorki narodov Vostoka*, red. I. S. Braginskiy, sostavitel' A. E. Bregel', predisloviye V. P. Anikina (M. 1961), with an excellent index (pp. 658–734).

8. Besides the recently published Soviet anthology only Phillott, *Persian Saws and Proverbs*; Beck, *Np. Konvers. Grammatik* (Heidelberg 1914), 210–212, and *Schlüssel z. np. Konversations-Gram.* (Heidelberg 1915), 52–54; St. Clair-Tisdall, *Modern Persian Grammar* (Heidelberg 1923), 208–214; cf. also Beidar, *Grammaire Kurde* (every § is followed by several proverbs); Miller, *Talïshskiye tekstï*, VII; Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah, *op. cit.*, 119–120.

9. Abdullozoda, R., *Zarbulmasal va maqalho dar asarhoi Sadriddin Aynī* (St. 1958).

10. Cf. Gianbattista Basile, *Pentameron*, where each of the fifty tales is terminated by a proverb or saying; Archer Tylor, *The Proverb* (Cambr., Mass., 1931), 27 *et seq.*

XI. CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters I have endeavoured to deal with at least the most important and most characteristic manifestations of Iranian folk-literature. It has been no simple task, not only on account of the vastness and complexity of the material, but even more so because until now questions pertaining to folk-literature have been tackled only as occasion offered and then not systematically.

Until quite recently problems to do with folk-literature have very often been passed over in silence, or at best some isolated details may have been glanced at. Reciprocal relationships have been overlooked and in most cases even historical and factual connections have not been given proper consideration. Synthesis is always difficult when there has been almost no analytical research and when comparative studies are still in a preliminary stage. The two standard works written by I.S. Braginskiy are the only exceptions in this respect.[1]

Under such circumstances it will be understood that the present essay, being the first of its kind, can be no more than an outline of Iranian folk-literature. May it serve as an introduction to a closer study of particular details.

The synthetical character, but mainly the limited extent, of the present work bars the inclusion of analyses of controversial questions. Consequently many very important problems remain still unsolved. Thus, for instance, questions concerning the influence of Iranian themes on other literatures have not been treated at all. In the same way an analysis of the mutual relations between the folk-literature of the Iranians and that of other peoples of the Near East has had to be omitted.

Each of these problems requires to be dealt with thoroughly and extensively in a separate monograph. Concise notes, explanations and references would not answer the purpose satisfactorily. An attractive object of discussion would be the connections between the Russian heroic folk-tale on Eruslan Lazarevich and the Iranian folk-epics[2], or the typological similarities between the *Gūrughlī* epics and the well-known English romances about the famous outlaw Robin Hood.[3] Just as im-

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portant and interesting are the parallels between Celtic and Iranian folk-literature.[4] Analyses of such problems go beyond the scope of the present study, for they would provide sufficient material for several books. But the time for this is not yet ripe. The criteria used so far are in general no more than formal, being incomprehensive and insufficiently specific, while the material available for study is heterogeneous and inadequate.

The limits imposed on length are also the reason why the interpretation of the most ancient documents of Iranian folk-literature and their authors have not been discussed, for it was necessary to abstain from more detailed explanations and analyses of Iranian folk-tales and epic subjects. We have also had to refrain from giving ethnographical and folkloristic evaluations, despite the fact that many valuable documents have been found and edited in recent years.

Monographical research should be undertaken in a way similar to that used by Kahlo when analysing the folk-tales collected by the brothers Grimm.[5] A mechanical gathering together of material, such as we find in part in the work of Geissler[6], should be avoided. As to methods of analysing Iranian folk-epics (especially in regard to the smaller forms – *dāstāns*), the model established by Lambertz[7] certainly has its attractions. The analysis of Iranian folk-epics needs enlarging by the application of new procedures and principles, as defined by I.S. Braginskiy.[8]

The following steps should be taken when undertaking monographical research in the domain of Iranian folk-literature: first a descriptive inventory of subjects and motifs should be made, followed by genetical and typological analyses. Having accomplished these preliminary and fundamental enquiries we must attempt to reconstruct the historical continuity in the evolution of Iranian folk-literature, and to identify its sources and correlations. Again I.S. Braginskiy points the way, though comparative studies on the literatures of Islam should be executed still more extensively. Foremost in attention and interest should be those investigations dealing with the relations between Arab literature and the literatures of the Iranian peoples, on the levels of both polite and folk-literature. The mutual relations between the Iranian nations and those where substrata, adstrata and superstrata of Iranian influence may be expected, should be analysed, whether in the field of language, polite literature, or folk-tradition.

The excellent work of Zhirmunskiy and Zarifov[9], once a bone of contention and an object of unmerited doubts, should now serve as model and inspiration for investigations of a similar kind. Only a careful and universal research into the problems that were first discussed by the authors mentioned can lead us to the objective truth. One point is now quite certain: it has been proved true that a subject in folk- or polite literature may not be autochthonous, but this does not exclude the ethnical authenticity of the national version. It means that, for instance, the subjects of Uzbek *dāstāns*, Kuntugmïsh[10] and Orzigul[11] are certainly of Iranian origin, but the composition is beyond all doubt Uzbek. On the contrary, the *Gūrughlī*-epics, or

Alpamīsh[12], differ substantially in their Tajik presentations from other (Turkic) versions. The Tajik ethnical authenticity of concrete poetical formations is unquestionable, even though the eastern Turkish origin of the subjects cannot be denied.

It is unfortunately true that most of the specialists in Iranian dialectology have paid far too little attention to the theoretical aspect of folk-literature. Thus only a small proportion of the texts composed in Iranian dialects is of any importance, leaving aside their linguistic value, as documents of folk-literature.

An ignorance of folk-literature or insufficient enlightenment in this field has had deleterious effects on the study of polite literature too, for without a knowledge of folk-literature and its rules many fundamental questions in literary history cannot be understood; for example the problem as to why certain works of literature survive so much longer than others that enjoy but ephemeral popularity, or questions dealing with the individuality of literary productions.

The whole issue was put in a nutshell by Maxim Gorky[13] when he said: "Literature has its roots in folklore", and "An author with a poor knowledge of folk-literature is a poor author." And it is true that in Persian literature we find very good evidence for the validity of this statement. This explains why the *Shāh-nāma* has survived for so many centuries and is popular to this day, and also why it has remained comprehensible even to uneducated and analphabetic Persians. Firdausī took the trouble to examine and work out the best records of the Iranian folk-tradition.[14] The popularity of Sa'dī's *Gulistān*[15] and Ḥāfiẓ' *dīvān*[16] rests on the same basis. As opposed to these examples, the works of many other poets who deliberately ignored the rules and esthetic conventions of folk-literature were forgotten soon after the death of their authors, as might indeed be expected since even in their life-time the works were intended only for a very limited and select public, written in a context that was entirely alien to the common people.

Unless one is familiar with the laws of folk-literature therefore, it is hard to understand on what traditions Iranian culture as a whole is based. This also is why our main concern has been to define the lines along which specific monuments of literature have developed and to explain their nature and social relevance, and to determine at the same time the relationships between folk- and polite literature.

Because my space was limited I have been able to give only a very restricted interpretation of the earliest traces of Iranian folk-literature to be found in the work of Greek and Roman authors, and the same applies for any deeper enquiry into the subjects of Iranian folk-tales. In a monograph it would be possible to pay more attention to the questions I have had to pass by in the present essay.

The various genres of Iranian folk-literature do not all belong to the same phase of development. Next to genuinely alive and vital kinds of folk-literature we find examples that are now obsolete. Radical changes in the social structure of Iran itself, and the complete revolution in the political system of the Tajiks can only leave one gues-

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sing at how folk-literature will develop in the years to come. The classical subjects will survive, as they have done in their long evolution up to now, irrespective of whether they belong to the categories of folk-epics, romantic epics, folk-stories of everyday life, folk-tales, both in prose and verse, or to folk-lyrics and proverbs. At the present moment it is impossible to forecast how soon and to what extent folk-literature will influence modern Persian polite literature, and contribute to its revival. In this respect Tajik polite literature is a long way ahead.[17]

It is equally hard to predict as yet how much the levelling out of language differences will effect folk-literature by spreading certain subjects that were formerly isolated in a smaller dialect area.

In Tajikistan as well as in Iran, new kinds of polite and folk-literature may be expected to develop. They will all owe their existence to the changing pattern of society. Whatever happens, however, we need not be afraid that folk-literature as such will disappear in the course of history. If we look at what has happened among the Tajiks, we have all the proof we need that the influence and importance of Iranian folk-literature is more likely to increase than to grow less. Everything will depend on whether modern writers know how to bring it into play in the right way, and to integrate it into their work.

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NOTES

1. Braginskiy, I.S., *Iz istorii tadzhikskoy narodnoy poezii. Elementï narodno-poeticheskogo tvorchestva v pamyatnikakh drevney i srednevekovoy pismennosti* (M. 1956); *Ocherki iz istorii tadzhikskoy literaturï.* (St. 1956).
2. Cf. *Russische Volksmärchen*, publ. by Erna Pomeranzewa (Berlin 1964), 390–417; cf. Zand, *Shest vekov slavï*, 95; cf. also Potanin, G. N., *Vostochnïe motivï v srednevekovom yevropeyskom epose* (M. 1899), 286–347; cf. Miller, Vsevolod, *Ekskursï* v *oblast' russkogo narodnago eposa* (M. 1892), *passim.*
3. Cf. Hole, Christina, *English Folk Heroes*, 71–102.
4. Cf. Coyajee, Sir J. C., *Studies in Shah-nameh* (Bombay (*c.* 1960)); Zenker, R., 'Die Tristansage und das persische Epos von Wîs und Râmîn', *Romanische Forschungen*, 29 (1910), 321–99; Suhtscheck, Fr. von, 'Wolfram von Eschenbach's Reimbearbeitung des Pārsivalnāmä', *Klio*, 25 (1932), 50 *et seq.*; Suhtscheck, Fr. von, 'Die iranischen Quellen in Wolframs Parzival', *ZDMG*, 82 (N.F. 7) (1928), LXXXII–LXXXIV, etc.
5. Cf. Kahlo, *Die Wahrheit des Märchens*; of course in any research the comparative and typological interpretation of folk-tales should be much more intensive and systematical; cf. also *Anmerkungen zu den KHM der Brüder Grimm*, von J. Bolte und G. Polívka, Bd. IV; *Zur Geschichte d. Märchen* (Leipzig 1930).
6. Geissler, Friedmar, *Die Brautwerbung in der Weltliteratur* (Halle 1955).
7. Lambertz, Max, *Die Volksepik der Albaner* (Halle 1958).
8. Braginskiy, *Iz istorii*, and *Ocherki.*

9. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *Uzbekskiy narodnïy geroicheskiy epos* (M. 1947).
10. Zhirmunskij–Zarifov, *op.cit*, 136–143; *Uzbekskiye nar. poemï* (Tashkent 1958), 345–503.
11. Zhirmunskiy–Zarifov, *op.cit.*, 146–150; *Uzb. nar. poemï*, 683–780.
12. Cf. *Alpamïsh, Trudï Tadzh. AN*, 107 (St. 1959); cf. also Zhirmunskiy, *Skazaniye ob Alpamïshe i bogatyrskaya skazka, passim.*
13. Cf. the special anthology *Pushkin i Gor'kiy o narodnom tvorchestve* (M. 1938), 27–98.
14. Cf. Romaskevich, *Persid. nar skazki*, 34.
15. Cf. Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 339–351; *Ocherki*, 312.
16. Cf. Braginskiy, *Iz ist.*, 358–363; *Ocherki*, 207–238.
17. Cf. *Antol. tadzh. poezii*, 1st ed., 9, 21.

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Cf. also: Araslï – B vib; Avesta – A i; Bartol'd (epos) – B vib; Bertel's (Navoi) – B vib; Coyajee – B vib; Duda – B vib; Eberman – B via; Gafurov – D ia; Hansen – B vib; Horn – B v; Christensen – B ii; B via; Krïmskiy – B v; Marzbān – B vib; Minorsky – B vib; Molé – B vib; Ibn an-Nadīm – A iv; Nikitine – D iiv; Niẓāmī – B vib; Rempis – B via; Richter – B via; Rozen – A iii; Spuler – B iii; Suhtscheck – A iii; Wikander – B via; Zenker – B vib.

KEY TO THE SUBJECTS OF MONOGRAPHS AND ARTICLES IN THE PRECEDING BIBLIOGRAPHIES

(Names of authors etc. refer to B VIb*, unless otherwise indicated)*

'Abbās Marvazī: Barthold ("To the Question").
"*Abdullonoma*": Sayfiyev (D IIb).
'Abdu'l-Vasī' Jabalī: Navā'ī, 'Abdu'l-Ḥ.
Abū-Isḥāq, Shāh Shaykh-: Navā'ī, 'Abdu'l-Ḥ.
Abu'l-'Alā Ganjavī: Shu'ā'u'l-mulk.
Abu'l-Faḍl: Ahuja (E VII).
Abū-Muslim: Muḥ. 'Abdu'l-Ghanī (B II).
Abū-Naṣr: Ethé.
Abū-Nuvās: Gabrieli – Mīnuvī.
Abū-Sa'īd b. abī'l-Khayr: Nicholson.
Abū-Shakūr: Dabīr Siyāqī.
Adīb Nīshāpūrī: Bāmdād – Ishrāq.
Adīb Ṣābir: Nafīsī.
Afḍal, Bābā-: Dānish-puzhūh.
Aïnī: s. 'Aynī.
Afḍalu'd-dīn Kāshānī: Modjtehedy.
'Ajzī, Saidaḥmad Ṣiddīqī: Aslanov (D IIb).
Ākhund-zāda (Akhundov): s. Fatḥ-'Alī Ā.
'Alavī: Rypka (C) – Shoytov (C).
'Am'aq: Ṣafā.
Aminzoda: Qosimov (D IIc).
Amīr Khusrau Dihlavī: Aliyev, G. Yu. – Baqoyev – Genko – Habib (B VIb, E v) – Kégl – Maḥjūb – Mu'īn – Naqi (E v) – Srivastava (B VIb, E VII) – Wahid.
Anṣārī Haravī: de Beaurecueil – Ivanow – Levy – Ritter – Zhukovskiy.
Anvarī: Mīnuvī ("Ijt.") – Navā'ī, 'Abdu'l-Ḥ. – Vorozheykina – Zhukovskiy.
"*Arabian Nights*" *s.* "*Thousand and One Nights*".
'Ārif: Bombaci (C).
Asadī: Bertel's – Chaykin – Ethé ("Tenzonen") – Kiyā – Molé ("Garshāsp") – Rugarli – Rypka (B IV: "Mutaqārib").
Asīrī: Khodzhayev (D IIb) – Sayfulloyev (D IIc).
'Aṭṭār: Badī'u'z-zamān – Bertel's – Garcin de Tassy (B III) – Lentz – Levend – Meier – Miklukho-Maklay – Murtaḍavī – Nafīsī – Ritter.
'Aufī: Nicholson.
Auḥadī Marāghī: Adīb Ṭūsī – Masrūr.
Avadhī: 'Ābidī (E VII).
Avicenna: s. Ibn Sīnā.
Aynī, Sadriddin: Abdullozoda (D IIc, F) – Azizqulov/Mullojonova (D IIc) – Aminova (D IIc) – Amonov (D IIc) – Asrorī (F) – Bečka (D IIc) – Braginskiy (D IIc) – Halimov (D IIc) – Hodizoda (D IIc) – Hoshim (D IIc) – Huseynzoda (D IIc) – "Jashnomai Aynī" (D IIc) – Lemenovskiy (D IIc) – Maniyozov (D IIc) – Mulloqandov (D IIc) – Muqimov (D IIc) – Nevskaya (D IIc) – Niyazov (D IIc) – "Ocherk ist. tadzh. sov. lit." (D IIc) – Pankina (D IIc) – Rahimov (D IIc) – Rajabov (D IIc) – "Sadriddin Aynī" (D IIc) – Sayfulloyev (D IIc) – Sokolov/Demidchik (D IIc) – Shukurov (D Wurmser (D IIc).
Ayyūqī: Ateş.

Bābā-Ṭāhir: Abrahamian (F) – Adīb Ṭūsī – Khānlarī – Minorsky – Mīnuvī – Vorozheykina – Yāsimī.
Bābur: Na'imuddin (E VII) – Ross (E VII) – Schimmel (E VII).
Badā'ūnī: Storey (E VII).

Badī'u'z-zamān Hamadhānī: Al-Kak.
Bahār: Ishaque (C) – Klyashtorina – Peysikov (C) – Zakhoder (C).
Bahā'u'd-dīn "Bahā'ī": Burhān Āzād – Nafīsī.
Bahā'u'd-dīn Valad: Khālid.
Bahā'u'llāh: Esslemont (B III).
"Bahman-nāma": Kobidze.
"Bahrām Chōbīn": Gumilev (F).
"Bahrām u Gulandām": Gvakhariya (F) – Koroghlī (F).
"Bakhtyār-nāma": Gvakhariya – Nöldeke.
Bal'amī: *s. Ṭabarī.*
Bannā'ī s. Binā'ī (Binoī).
Bāqillānī: von Grunebaum (B IV).
"Barlaam and Joasaph": Henning.
"Barzū-nāma": Rugarli.
Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī: Ritter.
Bīdil (Bēdil): Abdul Ghani (E V) – Abdullayev/Shukurov (D IIb) – Akhtar (D IIb, E V) – Ayni, Kh. (D IIb) – Ayni, S. (D IIb) – Bausani (D IIb, E VII) – Dehotī (D IIb) – Klimovich (D IIb) – "Maḥmūd Shabistarī" – Mirzoyev (D IIb) – Mujaddidī (D IIb) – Muminov (D IIb).
Bīnā'ī (Binoī): Mirzoyev (B VIb, D IIb) – Saljouqui (D IIb).
Bīrūnī: Krause.
Bobo Yunus: *s. Khudoydodzoda.*
Burhānī: Mu'īn.
Buzurgmihr: Christensen (F).
Buzurgzoda: Khromov (D IIc).

Chandar Bhān Brahman: Husain, I, (E VII).
Chāndūlāl Shādān: Shaukat (E VII).
Chekhov: Rozenfel'd (C).

Dānish (Donish), Aḫm. Kalla: Avezbayeva (D IIb) – Bečka (D IIb) – Bertel's (D IIb) – Hodizoda (D IIb) – Mirzoyev (D IIb) – Mirzozoda (D IIb) – Qosimzoda (D IIb) – Rajabov (D IIb) – Yuldashev (D IIb).
Dante: Bertel's (Sanā'ī) – Nicholson.
Daqīqī: Dabīr Siyāqī – Ritter.
Dārā Shukōh: Ghauri (E VII) – Hasan, Z. (E VII) – Hasrat (E V, E VII) – Narain (E VII) – Qanungo (E V).
Darvīsh-i Dihakī: Ahmadov – Boldīrev.
Dashtī: E'tesam-zadeh (C).
Donish: *s. Dānish.*
Fahlaviyyāt: Adīb Ṭūsī – Kūhī Kirmānī.
Fakhru'd-dīn Gurgānī: Gabrieli – Gvakhariya – Gvakhariya/Todua – Minorsky – Mīnuvī – Molé – von Stackelberg – Zenker.
Falakī: Hādī.
Fard: Hasan, M. (E VII).
Farhād-Mīrzā: Kégl (B VIa: "Tanulmányok") – Massé – Mudarrisī – Pinnock.
Farhād u Shīrīn: Aliyev, G. Y. (F) – Duda – Timurtaş.
Farrukhī Sīstānī: Ateş – Khaṭīb – Ritter – Rypka/Borecký – Yūsufī.
Farrukhī Yazdī: Gadzhizade (C) – Osmanova (C).
Fatḥ-'Alī Ākhund-zāda (Akhundov): Aliyev, S. M. – Çaferoğlu – Djafarov – Sharif – Shoytov.
Fatḥ-'Alī Shāh: Safā'ī Malāyirī.
Fayḍī: Desai (E VII) – Ghose (E VII).
Fayyāḍ (Fayyoz): Boldīrev (D IIb).
Fighānī, Bābā: Kausar – Suhaylī.
Firdausī: Aliyev, G. Y. (B VIb, F) – Andersen – Ateş – Aynī, S. – Bahār, M. T. – Bahārmast – Bajraktarević – Bartol'd – Bertel's – Cejpek (F) – Chaykin – Christensen – Coyajee – D'yakonov – Gaál – Geissler (F) – Giunashvili – von Grunebaum – Hansen – Humbert – Khadizade – Khayyāmpūr ("Yūs. u Zal.") – Kobidze (B VIb, F) – Kowalski – Massé – Minorsky – Mīnuvī ("Yūs. u Zal.") – Molé – Nafīsī ("Yūs. u Zal."; "Vazn") – Nöldeke – Osmanov (B VIb, F) – Ptitsīn – Ringgren (B VIa) – Ritter – Romaskevich – Rozenberg – Rypka (B IV: "Mutaqārib"; B VIb) – Ṣafā (B VIa) – Salač – Samoylovich (D IIb) – Schack (F) – Shafaq – Starikov (F) – Ṭabāṭabā'ī Muḥīṭ – Tagirdzhanov ("Yūs. u Zal.") – Tardov – Trever – Tushishvili – Vachha – Wikander (B VIa) – Wolff – Zhukovskiy (F); *s. also Shāh-nāma.*
Fitrat-i Zardūz: Sulaymonova (D IIb).
Fitzgerald: Arberry – Ḥikmat.
Fuchik: Tabarov (D IIc).
Fuḍūlī: Aliyev, G. Yu. – Araslī – Bertel's – Gulizade – Karahan – Köprülü.
Furūghī Bisṭāmī: Bausani.

Gayōmart: Hartman (F).
Ghaḍā'irī: Dabīr Siyāqī.
Ghālib: Ghafforov (E V) – Gilani (E VII) – Lakhanpal (E VII) – Pūlodova (E VII).
Ghanī: Nāzukī (E VII).

Ghaz(z)ālī: Asín – Smith.
Gobineau: Molé.
Goethe: Braginskiy – Burdach – Hāshimī – Lentz – Mommsen – Schaeder.
Gor'kiy: Areshyan (C) – Filishtinskaya (C) – Matviychuk (F) – Rozenfel'd (C) – Shukurov (D IIc).
Gulkhani: Muqimov (D IIb).
Gürüghlī: Braginskiy (F) – Cejpek (F) – Chicherov (F) – Chodzko (F) – Fatkhulloyev (F) – Klimovich (F) – Korev (F) – "Tadzhikskiy fol'klor" (F) – Zarifov (F) – Zhirmunskiy/Zarifov (F).

Hādī: Mudarrisī.
Ḥāfiẓ: Adīb Ṭūsī – Akhtar – Arberry – Bāmdād – Bausani – Boyce – Burdach (Goethe) – Dashtī – Demidchik – Farzad – al-Furātī (B VIa) – Galimova – Ghanī – Hāshimī – Ḥikmat – Humā'ī – Hūman – Jacob – Jalālu'd-dīn Muḥ. Dav(v)ānī – Javādī – Kamāliyān – Kasravī – Khalkhālī – Khānlarī – Košut – Kotetishvili – Krïms'kïy – Lescot – Maḥmūdī – Majewska – Makovel'skiy – Marr – Monteil – Mu'īn – Murtaḍavī – Nafīsī – Ohja (B VIa) – P. N. – Qazvīnī – Rasmussen – Reychman – Rijā'ī – Ritter – Roemer – Rypka – Schaeder – Shomuhamedov – Stolz – Veit – Wickens.
Hakim Karim: Kamoliddinov (D IIc).
Ḥālī: Bausani (B VI).
Ḥallāj: Massignon (B III, B VIb).
Hamgar: Nafīsī – Shu'ā'u'l-mulk.
Ḥasan Dihlavī: Abbasov (E VII) – Borah (E VII).
Hātifī: Taeschner.
Ḥazīn: Askari (E VII) – Sirishk.
Hibalrūdī: Kégl (F).
Hidāyat, Ṣ: "'Aqā'id u afkār" (C) – Kamshad (C) – Kislyakov (F) – Komissarov (C) – Kubíčková (C) – Lazard (C) – Monteil (C) – Nūrā'ī (C) – Rozenfel'd (C) – Scarcia (C).
Ḥijāzī: Jamāl-zāda (C) – Komissarov (C).
Hilālī (Hilolī): Aynī, K. S. (B VIb, D IIb) – Mirzoyev (D IIb) – Sattorov (D IIb).
Hoziq: Amirqulov (D IIb) – Kayumov (D IIb).
Humā: Humā'ī.
Humām: Nakhjavānī.
Humāyūn: Banerji (E II) – Gulbadan (E II) – Hadi Hasan (E VII) – Jauhar Āftābchī (E VI).
Ḥusayn b. Bāyqarā: Bartol'd (D Ib).

Ibn-i Yamīn: Imronov – Khekmat – Mullojononovi – Yāsimī.
Ibn Mufarrigh: Fück (B IV).
Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna): Akhtar – Aynī, S. – Bādī'u'z-zamān – Bertel's – Corbin – Gardet – Goichon – Mirzoyev (D IIb) – Mu'īn – Navā'ī, 'Abdu'l-Ḥ. – Rempis – Siyāsī – Vajda (B I) – Zajączkowski.
Ibn Ṭufayl: Abdul Hai.
Ibnu'l-'Arabī: Affifi – Palmer (B III).
Ibnu'l-Muqaffa': Fück (B IV) – Ghufrānī – Iqbāl – Sourdel.
Ibodov, Domullo Halim: Ahmadov (F).
Ikromī: Boboyev (D IIc) – Hasanov (D IIc) – Huseynzoda (D IIc).
'Imādu'd-dīn: Stolz.
Iqbāl: Abdul Hakim (E VII) – Anikeyev (E V, E VII) – Bausani (E VII) – Courtois (E VII) – Enver (E V) – Fück (E VII) – Ghani (E I) – Ḥusayn, M. (E VII) – Iqbal Singh (E V) – Khaṭībī (E VII) – Maitre, L.-C. (E V) – Marek (E VII) – Mīnuvī (E VII) – Nicholson (E VII) – Reyazul Hasan (E VII) – Roy (E VII) – Sachchindanand (E V) – Saiyidain (E V) – Schimmel (E V, E VII) – Vahid (E V) – Whittemore (E VII).
'Iraj-Mīrzā: Rossi (C).
'Irāqī: Ajuha (E VII) – Arberry – Ojha (B VIa).
'Iṣāmī: Husain, M. (E VI, E VII).
'Ishqī: Machalski (C).
"Iskandar-nāma": Bertel's (F) – Pfister (F).
Ismā'īl I: Minorsky.
I'timādu's-salṭāna: Zhukovskiy.

Jabalī: *s. 'Abdu'l-Vasī' J.*
Jājarmī: Qazvīnī ("Mu'nis").
Jalālu'd-dīn Rūmī: Abdul Hakim (E VII) – Afzal Iqbal – Badī'u'z-zamān – Dashtī – al-Furātī (B VIa) – Gauharīn – Gölpınarlı – Hakim – Kégl – Kodve-Khorb – Murtaḍavī – Odilov – Richter – Ritter – Schimmel – Yaltkaya.
Jalil, Rahim: Otakhonova (D IIc) – Tabarov (D IIc).
Jamālu'd-dīn 'Abdu'r-Razzāq: Nafīsī.
Jamālu'd-dīn Ḥusayn Injū Shīrāzī: Nazir (E VII).
Jamāl-zāda: Alavi (C: "Sar o tah-e") – Vassighi.

Jāmī: Arberry – Bertel's – Blochmann (B IV) – Chaykin – Hashim – Ḥikmat – Kobidze – Kuliyev – Lescot – Mīnuvī – Ojha (B VIa) – Ritter.
Javharizoda: *s. Suhaylī.*
Junayd: Arberry.

"*Kalīla va Dimna*": Aliyev, Gh. (F) – "*L'Âme de l'Iran*" (B VIa: Massé) – Cejpek (F) – Chauvin (B I) – Maḥjūb – Nöldeke (F) – Schulthess (F).
Kalīm Hamadhānī (*Kāshānī*): Anṣārī, Sh. Bēgum – Kishāvarz.
Kalla: *s. Dānish.*
Kamāl Khujandī: Ayni, S. – Braginskiy.
Kamālu'd-dīn Ismā'īl: Iqbāl – Masrūr – Vorozheykina.
Kāmī Qazvīnī: Fakhru'z-zamān Bēgam (E VII).
Karim Devona: Nazarov (D IIb).
Karīm-Khān-Zand: Navā'ī (B II).
Kay-Kā'ūs: Frye – Iqbāl – Mīnuvī.
Khāqānī: Āmūzgār – Ateş – Boldīrev – Chaykin – Dashtī – Hādī Ḥasan (B VIa) – Kandī – Khanikof – Minorsky – Nāṣiḥ – Rāynart (Reinert) – Rypka – Rzakulizade – Turjānīzāda – Vil'chevskiy.
Khayyām: Akhtar – Aliyev, R. M./Osmanov – Arberry – Badī'u'z-zamān – Bajraktarević – Bolotnikov – Christensen – Csillik – Dashtī – Machalski – "Maḥmūd Shabistarī" – Mīnuvī – Moročnik/Rozenfel'd – Nafīsī – Rashīdī Tabrīzī – Rempis – Ritter – aṣ-Ṣarrāf – Varasteh – Yakānī – Zhukovskiy.
"*Khudāy-nāma*": Kirste – Osmanov.
Khudoydodzoda, Bobo Yunus: Nudel' (D IIc).
Khusrau Dihlavī: *s. Amīr Kh. D.*
"*Khusrau u Shīrīn*": Aliyev, G. Y. (F) – Demirtaş – Timurtaş – Zajączkowski.
Khusravānī: Ethé.
Khusravī: Machalski (C).
Khvājū: Köprülü – Nafīsī.
Kisā'ī: Ethé – Ishaque.
Kūhī, Bābā-: Bertel's – Tagirdzhanov – Vorozheykina.
"*Kūsh-nāma*": Molé.

Labībī: Dabīr Siyāqī – Rypka/Borecký.
Lāhutī (*Lohūtī*): Davronov (D IIc) – Germanetto (D IIc) – Huseynzoda (D IIc) – Isoyev (D IIc) – Muqimov (D IIc) – "Ocherk ist. tadzh. sov. lit." (D IIc) – Osmanova (C) – Shklovskiy (D IIc) – Shukūhī (D IIc) – Zand (D IIc).
"*Laylī u Majnūn*": Bitlisi (F) – Fück (B IV) – Krachkovskiy – Levend – Maḥjūb.
Lutfī: Hoji (D IIc).

al-Ma'arrī: Nicholson.
Maftūn: Nakhjavānī.
Maghribī: Adīb Ṭūsī.
Mahdī-Khān: Cheyshvili – Samoylovich.
Maḥmūd Shabistarī: Tarbiyat.
Mahsatī: Ishaque (B VIb), C: "Poetesses") – Kishāvarz – Meier – Mushīr-i Sālimī.
Makhmūr: Valikhojayev (D IIb).
Maleho: Mirzoyev (D IIb).
Malang Jān: Dvoryankov (F).
Malik Qummī: Nazir (E VII).
Malkum-Khān: Christensen (C) – Ibragimov (C) – Ṭabāṭabā'ī (C).
Manūchihrī: Ishaque – Qazvīnī.
Marzbān: Gabrieli – Muḥaqqiq – Zajączkowski.
Masīḥ Kāshānī: Pizhmān.
Mas'ūd: Jamāl-zāda (C).
Mas'ūd-i Sa'd: Qazvīnī – Suhaylī.
Mijmar: Ṭabāṭabā'ī Muḥiṭ.
Mirshakar: Bobokalonova (D IIc) – Kedrina (D IIc) – Mirzozoda (D IIc) – "Ocherk ist. tadzh. sov. lit." (D IIc) – Tabarov (D IIc).
Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān: Zhukovskiy.
Muḥāsibī: Smith.
Muḥsin-i Fayḍ: Bertel's.
Muḥtasham: Bayḍā'ī Vaqār.
Mu'izzī: Khusravānī – Marek.
Mujīr: Bāstānī-Rād.
Munshī: Baqir (E VII).
Mushfiqī: Ahrorī (D IIb) – Semenov (D IIb).
Muṭahhar-i Karā: Mirza (E VII) – Shervānī (E VII).

Najāt Iṣfahānī: Gulchīn-i ma'ānī.
Najmu'd-dīn Kubrā: Bertel's (D IIb).
Nakhlī: Sayfiyev (D IIb).
Nakhshabī: Chauvin (B I) – Pertsch.
Nartes, legends of the: "Antol. abkhazskoy, kabardinskoy poezii" (F) – Chicherov (F) – Dalgat (F) – Dumézil (F).
Nasafī: Palmer (B III).
Nashāṭ: Qā'im-maqām.
Nāṣir-i Khusrau: Ashurov – Bertel's, A. Y. – Ethé – Habibov (F) – Ivanow – Machalski –

Muḥaqqiq – Nikitina – Schaeder (B VIa) – Wickens.
Naṣīru'd-dīn Ṭūsī: Humā'ī.
Naṣru'llāh: Chauvin (B I: "Kalīlah").
Nāṭiq Makrānī: Kausar (E VII).
Navā'ī (*Navoī*): Bartol'd (D Ib) – Bertel's (D IIb) – Boldīrev (B VIb, D IIb) – Gandjeï (D IIb) – Ḥikmat – Levend – Semenov (D IIb) – Tarlan (D IIb) – Yakubovskiy (D Ib).
Nāẓim (*Nozim*): Zuhuriddinov (D IIb).
Ni'matu'llāh: Aubin – Ishaque – Nūr-bakhsh Kirmānī.
Nithārī (*Nisorī*): Boldīrev (D IIb) – Ḥabībī (D IIb).
Niyozī: Sharifov (D IIc).
Niẓāmī: 'Abdu'n-Na'īm – Aḥmad 'Alī – Aliyev (B VIb, F) – Araslï – Bertel's (B VIb, F) – Boldīrev – Devek – Duda – Dunayevskiy – Gabrieli – Geissler (F) – Gulizade – Guseynov – Gvakhariya – Ḥikmat – Houtsma – Iqbāl (B II) – Klimovich (B VIb, F) – Krachkovskiy (B VIb, F) – Krïmskiy – Maḥjūb – Makovel'skiy – Marr – McDonald – Mu'īn – Pfister (F) – Resulzade – Reychman – Ritter – Rypka (B IV, B VIa, B VIb) – Shaginyan – Shihābī – Ṭabāṭabā'ī Muṣṭ. – Wesselski – Zachoder – Zajączkowski; *s. also*: *"Farhād"* – *"Khusrau"* – *"Laylā"* – *"Turandot"*.
Niẓāmu'l-mulk: Falsafī (B VIa) – Mīnuvī – Nafīsī (Niẓāmiyya) – Rippe (B II) – Schabinger (B II) – Tauer (B II).
Nizārī: Bārādīn (Borodin) – Bayburdi – Durrī.
Nozim: *s. Nāẓim.*

Parvīn: Ishaque (C: "Poetesses") – Kishāvarz (B VIa) – Rypka (C).
Payrav Sulaymonī: Aul (D IIc) – Bečka (D IIc) – Hoshim (D IIc) – Khodoydodov/Najmiddinov (D IIc) – Nasriddinov (D IIc) – Tabarov (D IIc).
Pirmuhammadzoda: Yusupov (D IIc).
Platen, Graf von: Veit.
Proverbs: Kégl (F) – Phillot (F).
Pūlodī: Atokhon (D IIc).
Pūr-i Bahā: Kubíčková – Minorsky.
Pushkin: Braginskiy – Rozenfel'd (C).

Qā'ānī: "Furūghī" – Kégl (B VIa: "Tanulmányok") – Kubíčková – Ṭabāṭabā'ī Muḥīṭ.
Qābūs: Iqbāl.
"Qābūs-nāma": *s. Kay-Kā'ūs.*
Qāsim Kāhī: Hadi Hasan (E VI, E VII).
Qāsimu'l-anvār: Massé.
Qaṭrān: Dhukā – Kasravī (B VIa, B VIb) – Ross.
Quli Quṭb Shāh: Basu (E VII).
Qurratu'l-'ayn Ṭāhira: Ishaque (B VIb, C: "Poetesses") – Root.
Quṭb: Zajączkowski.

Rābi'a: Smith.
Rābi'a Quzdārī (*Khuzdārī*): Ishaque (B VIb, C: "Poetesses") – Kausar (E VII) – Kishāvarz (B VIa) – Meier ("Die schöne Mahsatī") – Mushir-i Sālimī (B VIa).
Rahimī: Kirilov (D IIc) – Ma'sumī (D IIc).
Rāqim, Sayyid: Semënov (D IIb).
Rashīd-i Vaṭvāṭ: Horst – Iqbāl.
Rashīdu'd-dīn: Jahn (E II).
Riḍā-qulī Hidāyat: Churchill – Kégl.
Riyāḍī: Ṣafā'ī Malāyirī.
Rūdakī: Aliyev, Gh. (F) – Amonov – Ayni, S. – Azizqulov – Badī'u'z-zamān – Basirov – Bertel's, A. Y. – Dabīr Siyāqī – Huseynzoda (F) – Ishaque – Kobidze – Mirzoyev – Mirzozade (F) – Mu'īn – Nafīsī – "Namunahoi fol'klor" (F) – Ross – Tal'man/Yunusov (B I) – Zand.
Ruknā: *s. Masīḥ Kāshānī.*
Rustam: Maskūb.

Ṣabā: Nakhjavānī.
Ṣabāḥī: Bayḍā'ī.
Ṣabūḥī: Safā'ī Malāyirī.
Sa'dī: Adīb Ṭūsī – Akhtar – Aliyev, R. M. – Aynī, S. – Bacher – Badī'u'z-zamān – Chaykin – Dashtī – Ḥālī – Iqbāl – Javādī – Krachkovskiy – Massé – Murtaḍavī – Nafīsī – Qazvīnī – Sultanov – Taymas – Todua.
Ṣadrā (*Ṣadru'd-dīn*): Abū-'Abdi'llāh – Mishkātu'ddīn.
Sadri Ziyo: Siddiqov (D IIb).
Ṣafā Isfahānī: Ishrāq.
Saḥābī: Ṭabāṭabā'ī Muḥīṭ.
Ṣāḥib b. 'Abbād: Bahmanyār – Nāṣiḥ.
Ṣā'ib: Genceli.
Saidalī Valizoda: Amonov (F).
Saidmurodov: Mirsaidova (D IIc).

Salari: Desai (E VII).
Salmān-i Sāvajī: Yāsimī.
"*Sām-nāma*": Hādi Ḥasan (B VIa).
Sanā'ī: Bertel's – Khalīlu'llāh – Kégl – Mīnuvī – Nicholson – Ritter.
Ṣanī'u'd-daula: Zhukovskiy.
Sarmad: Abdu'l-Wali (E VII) – Asīrī (E VII) – Hashmi (E VII).
Saudā (*Savdo*): Azizqulov (D IIb) – Galimova (D IIb).
Sāya: Klyashtorina (C).
Sayf-i Sarāyī: Bodrogligeti – Taymas.
Sayf-ī Bukhārī: Blochmann (B IV) – Mirzoyev (D IIb).
Sayyidā Nasafī (*Sayyido*): Mirzoyev (D IIb) – Ptitsīn (D IIb).
Selim I: Horn.
Shahīd: Ishaque.
Shāhīn (*Shohin*): Khayyāmpūr – Mirzozoda (D IIb).
"*Shāh-nāma*": Maskūb – Osmanov; *s. also Firdausī* – "*Khudāy-nāma*".
"*Shahriyār-nāma*": Aynī, K. S.
Shakespeare: Ḥikmat.
Shams-i Qays: Adīb Ṭūsī ("Fahlaviyyāt").
Shamsu'd-dīn Kāshānī: Murtaḍavī.
Shaybānī: Bonelli – Kégl.
Shifā'ī: Āzād – Suhaylī.
Shihāb: Bahār – Buzurg Niyā – Ṭabāṭabā'ī Muḥiṭ.
Shohin: *s. Shāhīn.*
Shūrīda: Faṣīḥī – Ḥikmat.
"*Shūrob*": Karimov (D IIc) – Saloh (D IIc).
Ṣiddīqī: *s. 'Ajzī.*
"*Sindbād-nāma*": Bertel's – Dabīr Siyāqī – Ol'denburg – Perry; cf. B VIb *s.v.*
Sirus: Hoshim (D IIc).
Sodiq: Karimov (D IIb).
Suhaylī Javharizoda: Amonov/Sayfulloyev (D IIc).
Suhravardī: Badi'u'z-zamān – van den Bergh – "Ḥāfiẓ" (Wilberforce-Clarke) – Ritter.
Surūsh: Kégl (B VIa: "Tanulmányok").
Sūzanī: Bertel's.

Ṭabarī: Romaskevich.
Ṭāhir: *s. Bābā-Ṭ.*
Ṭāhira: *s. Qurratu'l-'ayn.*
Tāj Rēza: Abdus Sattar Khan (E VII).
Ṭālibūf: Ādamiyyat.
Tanūkhī: Gabrieli.
Ṭaqī Auḥadī: Nazir Ahmed (E VII).
Tarbiyat: Browne (B VII).
Ṭarzī Afshār: Bertel's – Kasravī (B VIa).
"*Taurāt*": Dānish-puzhūh.
ta'ziya: Baumgartner (F) – Cejpek (F) – Duda (F) – Krïms'kïy (F) – Litten (F) – *Théâtre persan* (F) – Virolleaud (F).
"*Thousand and One Nights*": Bouisson (F) – Cejpek (F) – Cosquin (F) – Eliséeff (F) – Gerhardt (F) – Henninger (F) – Lahy-Hollebecque (F) – Montet (F) – Oestrup (F) – Paret (F) – Rescher (F).
"*Tristan*": Zenker.
Ṭughrā'ī: Schabinger.
"*Turandot*": Gozzi (F) – Meier (F) – "Mille et un jour" (F) – Niẓāmī ("Haft Paykar") – Schiller (F).
Tursunzoda: Boboyev (D IIc) – Niyozmuhammadov (D IIc) – "Ocherk ist. tadzh. sov. lit." (D IIc) – Osmanova (D IIc) – Qosimov (D IIc) Sayfulloyev (D IIc) – Shukurov (D IIc) – Tabarov (D IIc).
"*Ṭūṭī-nāma*": Chauvin (B I) – Pertsch.
Tutmacı: Levend.

'*Ubayd Zākānī*: Bahā'u'd-dīn 'Āmilī – Christensen – Dāvarī – Javān-mard – Mīnuvī – Radzhabov.
Ulugh-Beg: Bartol'd (D Ib).
Ulughzoda: "Ocherk ist. tadzh. sov. lit." (D IIc) – Shukurov (D IIc) – Yusupov (D IIc).
'*Unṣurī*: Bertel's – Tarbiyat.
'*Urfī*: 'Ābid – Ghose (E VII) – Muḥammad 'Alī – Na'imuddin (B VIb, E VII) – Ojha (B VIa).
Uzeir Gadzhibekov: Korev (F).

Vāḍiḥ (*Vozeh*): Hodizoda (D IIb) – Ne'matzodah (D IIb).
Vafo: Asrorī (D IIc).
Valizoda: Ma'sumī (D IIc).
Vāṣifī (*Vosifī*): Aynī, S. (D IIb) – Boldïrev (D IIb) – Mirzoyev (D IIb).
"*Vīs u Rāmīn*": *s. Fakhru'd-dīn Gurgānī.*
Viṣāl: Kégl – Navābī – Rūḥānī Viṣāl – Ṭabāṭabā'ī Muḥiṭ.
Vozeh: *s. Vāḍiḥ.*

Yaghmā: Ismailzade – Kégl (B VIa: "Tanulmányok") – Sajjadi – Yaghmā'ī.
Ya'qūb-i Layth-i Ṣaffārī: Bāstānī (B II).
Yūshīj: Klyashtorina (C) – Machalski (C) – Munibar (C).
"*Yūsuf u Zalīkha*": Gvakhariya-Hikmet *s. also Firdausī.*
Yusufī: Mirzozoda (D IIc) – Rahimzoda/Farhat (D IIc).

Ẓahīrī: Bertel's.
Zēbu'n-nisā: Ghafforov (D IIb) – Ishaque (E v) – Shiblī (E v).
Zhukovskiy: Romaskevich (F).
Ẓuhūrī Turshīzī: Nāẓir.